





Archibald Co. Gunter

Adrienne de Portalis

A NOVEL

BY

ARCHIBALD CLAVERING GUNTER

Author of "Mr. Barnes of New York," "The Fighting Troubadour," etc.

NEW YORK
HURST & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

Copyright, 1900, by A. C. GUNTER.

All rights reserved.

ADRIENNE DE PORTALIS

BOOK I

THE RUNAWAY BARONESS

CHAPTE	R		PAGE
I.	The	Grasp of Monsieur Vidocq .	5
II.	The	Passport of the Dead	14
III.	The	Montereau Boat	25
IV.	A C	urious Night Ride	37
V.	The	Metamorphosis of Madame la	
		Baronne	55

BOOK II

A PATRIOT CONSPIRATOR

CHAPTE	R			PAGE
VI.	The Austrian Captain .			69
	The Voice in the Night .			78
VIII.	"We Must Strike Before	the	Flowers	
	Bloom!".	•		92
IX.	"How's That for a Close-	fisted	British	
	Lover of Liberty?"			103
X.	The Pursuing Shadow .			114

CONTENTS

BOOK III

THE TOUCH OF LOVE

СН	APTER XI.	The Hand of Bolza	PAGE 130
	XII.	"Last Night You Did Not Think Me	Ů
		Child!"	144
	XIII.	The Commotion at the Opera House	151
	XIV.	"Now, It Is Thy Head or Mine!".	164

BOOK IV

THE NAKED HANDS OF THE PEOPLE

CHAPTER				PAGE
XV.	The Young Lady Smuggler .			179
XVI.	The Arms in the Hay			188
XVII.	The Three Temptations .			197
XVIII.	Some Curious News from Englan	d		2 I I
XIX.	Two Gentlemen Whisper in the	Op	era	
	Box			223
XX.	Madame Iago			234
XXI.	The Populace Cast Down Their Id	ol		242
XXII.	A Letter that Shakes an Empire			250
XXIII.	Saved By One Whiff of a Cigar			260
XXIV.	"I Will Make Sacrifice!" .			273
XXV.	The Hands of the People .		,	283
XXVI.	The Fight for the Tosa Gate			292
XXVII.	The Captain of Garibaldians .		٠.	301

ADRIENNE DE PORTALIS.

BOOK I.

THE RUNAWAY BARONESS.

CHAPTER I.

THE GRASP OF MONSIEUR VIDOCQ.

"Halt, in the name of the Law!" cries a man in a

pursuing fiacre.

"For the love of God, drive on!" screams a desperate girl to the coachman of a hack racing nearly a hundred yards in advance of the pursuing carriage, which holds two mouchards of the galley-slave-chief-of-detectives, Monsieur Eugène François Vidocq.

So the two vehicles rattle over the stones of the Ave-

nue de Neuilly and reach the Arc de Triomphe.

Crouched on the cushions of her coupé the girl, her slight form draped in the somber weeds of widowhood, gazes back at the voiture that is following her, and notes, though its horses are whipped remorselessly, it does not gain upon the one in which she sits wringing her hands, the gloom of the evening scarcely concealing the pathetic terror of her beautiful, innocent, and almost childlike eyes.

"HALT, IN THE NAME OF THE KING!"

"A hundred francs and you get me into Paris safe from these awful men!" sobs the girl, the sweetness of her voice made harsher by the latent terror in it. "Please, please, Monsieur, here's the money!" A little, white, ungloved hand slips into his brawny one a

couple of fifty-franc notes.

"There is a revolution in Paris to-night, and to-morrow there will be no King!" jeers the hackman back at his pursuers. Then actuated a little by the helpless beauty of his youthful charge, and still more by the thought of five louis in his pocket, he whips his way down the Avenue des Champs Elysées, and passing the Rond Point gets nearer to the great boulevards of a city convulsed by the commotion of dethroning a dynasty.

For this is the last night of Louis Philippe, the Republican King; this is the last day of the bourgeoisie Paris, which has rested so quietly since the Restoration.

Having grown tired of the tranquillity of a citizenking, it now desires some other government—what, it does not know—anything to give it the vivacity of change. So this night, the French Revolution of 1848 is on!

An ovation to Monsieur Odilon Barrot has changed a week ago into a cry against Monsieur Guizot. This has grown into a wild rebellion of the undisciplined National Guard and a fantastic populace against a king who has not the courage to treat them à la Napoleon, and feed them with grapeshot and musket balls.

The political ferment of the week has brought about a financial ferment. Disaster has struck the Paris Bourse. The first railway furor has just run its course, and the stocks of the newly built chemins de fers, connecting Paris with London, via Calais and Boulogne, and those in course of construction from the capital of France toward the Mediterranean, have depreciated more than half their value on the Paris Exchange. Financial ruin has stricken the trading classes, who have invested their savings in them. This has expedited the political ruin which is about to come upon the aristocracy, who have flocked back with their king to France after the last downfall of Napoleon.

So on this night, the twenty-third of February, 1848,

the streets of the French capital are a mass of hurrying citizens, soldiers robed in the gorgeous uniforms of the National Guard, mingled with patriotic tradesmen and blue-bloused workmen, singing the revolutionary songs of the period, the "Chant du Depart," and "Mourir pour la Patrie;" though a few, more bloodthirsty than their fellows, are shouting "La Marseillaise," causing the more soberminded Parisian shopkeepers to grow very pale, for at that day this song was linked very closely in French minds with the guillotine and political massacre, a good many hearing it this night having lost their ancestors, male and female, fifty years before, when France, singing it, had become a maniac nation.

But whatever they sing or cry, whether it is "Vive la Reform," or "Vive la Republique," or "Vive la Nation," no one dares to cry "Vive le Roi." They are all determined to make an end of the demure, placid Paris of Louis Philippe: that self-righteous bourgeoisie Paris that Paul de Kock and Eugene Sue described, of which Alfred de Musset sang, under whose surface was an abandon and debauchery which would have done honor to Sodom and graced Gomorrah; a city where that celebrated cabaret of Father Guillotine called "La Queue du Chat" (The Tail of the Cat), flourished, in which its fantastic dancers passed the pipe along, and gentlemen transferred the guid of tobacco from their brutal mouths to the pouting lips of the nymphs with whom they tripped the measures;* where the cancan raged, at the Grande bals d'Opera, under Musard's inspiring music; a dance that was intensified at the Mabille, made more voluptuous at the Grande Chaumiere, and developed into the wildest debauchery at the Closerie des Lilas, as the young gentlemen of the Quartier Latin footed it with the prettiest etudiantes.

But no revolution takes place in Paris without indescribable excitement and a blood letting, great or small. So to-night the streets are full of the rabble of

^{*} For further description of this peculiar place see The Memoirs of $Vidocq_t$ p. 345.—Ep.

Paris, and their friends, the National Guard, with guns loaded; though about the Tuilleries and main boulevards, the half-hearted legions of a monarch even now making ready for flight, are drawn up to presive order,

and to support a government that is tottering.

A portion of these troops are stationed on the Boulevard des Capucines, to prevent the populace going in mass to serenade Odilon Barrot. Around them surge the passions of a Parisian revolution and the fantastic fury of a Gallic mob. Cobblestones will soon encounter bayonets; blue blouses and red shirts are about to grapple with the uniforms of the regular army under the shadows of night, which, while they disguise the horrors of such a combat, add to them an indefinite vagueness that is appalling.

It is into this Paris that the frightened girl comes flying along the Avenue Champs Elysées drawn by tired horses that are being whipped to their utmost speed by her cocher, who has received the greatest pour boire of his life. She gazes abstractedly at the big buildings on the main boulevards looming up before her, in the gloom of evening. As her carriage leaves the picturesque cafés and cabarets and the leafless winter trees of the main drive that this night is quite deserted-all amusement places being closed and Parisians not engaged in the revolution thinking it safer to remain indoors—the graceful figure of the fugitive shivers, though not from cold; for a raging fiver is in her veins. She is flying from everything that I as made her former life. She is turning her back upon a past that has been unhappy, escaping from a future that she feels will be more horrible—a future in which she sees the prison, perhaps even the executioner.

Her coupé is still pursued remorselessly by the carriage bearing the two mouchards. As they fly past the bronze horse on the Cirque National, one of them chuckles to the other: "We'll have our hands upon the little widow in a jiffy. Old Vidocq values the child

at ten thousand francs. We'll catch Madame in the Place de la Concorde."

But they do not catch "Madame" in the Place de la Concorde. Fear dares more than avarice. The girl widow shrieks to her coachman, "For the love of the Virgin, and another hundred francs, drive faster!"

"Madame, there is a great crowd. Tonnerre de

Dieu, I hear a pistol shot!"

"Five hundred francs if you get me to Monsieur Perrier's, in the Rue du Sentier."

"Aha, the bankers?"

"Yes. There I'll pay you the money! I swear it by the cross!"

"Diable, I'll take the chance!"

The coachman whips his horses through the square, forcing back the hurrying crowd and nearly running over one or two gamins, who do not fly from him rapidly enough. So they speed through the square, and turning into the Rue de la Concorde dash from it into the Boulevard Madeleine, followed by curses and sacrés from the enraged populace.

Here the crowd surges around them, and cuts off the chasing carriage, the occupants of which come to grief, a thief in the mob crying out, "Nom de Dieu, there's Salache, one of Vidocq's fly catchers!" With this, the two officers are pulled from their flacre, battered till they scream, and are lucky to escape with their lives from the assaults of a crowd, a good many of whom bear no love to the great galley-slave-detective and his myrmidons.

Looking back at the disaster that has come upon her pursuers, the girl bursts into a childlike laugh and cries to her coachman: "See! Mon Dieu, the crowd are beating our enemies!" But this crowd is now packed in front of her coach also, and prevents advance. Then there is the sound of a distant volley up the Boulevard des Capucines, and the mob rushes backward, some uttering cries of fear, and others shouts of rage.

"Stop those damned horses, and knock that accursed

coachman on the head!" commands a gigantic, ferocious, blue-bloused sans-culotte.

But the Jehu is too quick, and, dashing into a side street, drives north through the Rue Caumarlin, along which street a number of the rioters also fly.

"Quick!" calls the young lady, in whose brown eyes fear is now dominated by excitement. "The five hundred francs at the door of Monsieur Perrier. Hurry

for my life!"

"Sapristi, I'll do it for my own!" mutters the cocher, and whips up rapidly, going east through the Rue des Mathurins, then turning south into the Chaussée d'Antin, foolishly attempting to again make the main boulevards.

But as he approaches the Des Capucines, suddenly the roll of musketry comes solid and prolonged in three awful volleys; the street they are in is thronged by a Parisian mob, flying for their lives; fugitives, with limbs dripping blood, pass them; the ferocious women of the slums, with hoarse cries of terror, surge around them; screaming men, in the uniform of the National Guard, scurry from their brothers of the regular army, whose volleys are now stirring Paris to madness and sealing the fate of the king they defend.

Following this crowd, which has now become a little thinner, staggers a bleeding woman, humbly yet neatly dressed. With a moaning sigh she falls on the sidewalk beside the carriage, which the coachman has has-

tily pulled up.

Seeing this, the trembling fugitive in the interior trembles no more. She calls quickly: "Let me out, please let me out! There is a wounded woman in the street."

In a second the door of the hack is opened, and an angel of mercy is beside the sufferer. The subdued light of a flickering street-lamp permits her to see that the bosom of the modest dress is stained with blood. "Ciel, they have murdered you!" cries the girl, wringing her hands.

"A shot in the body," murmurs the fainting creature, then sighs: "If—if I could only get home."

"Where do you live?"

"Number forty-five Rue Joubert."

"It is but a step from here, and in the right direction—away from the troops," remarks the listening cocher.

"Then help me to put her into the hack!" cries the lady.

A moment after the driver places the wounded woman in the vehicle, and the young lady, getting in beside her charge, strives to fan the pale face of the sufferer with her handkerchief, as the coach is turned to the north again and driven rapidly up the Rue Chaussée d'Antin.

Five minutes after they are in front of No. 45 Rue Joubert. Its door is open. From it the *concierge* has wandered to see the grand game going on this night in Paris.

To her nurse the wounded woman murmurs: "My room is au quartrieme, number twenty-six, the key is in the concierge's loge."

Beckoning the coachman to her aid, the girl, who now seems a ministering angel, with his assistance, lifts the almost fainting woman from the *coupé*, and carries her up three flights of stairs to a plainly furnished, yet cleanly apartment.

Opening the door of this with the key taken from the room of the *concierge* below, the two put the sufferer upon a bed.

Then the young lady places a twenty-franc piece in the hands of the *cocher*, and pleads: "Please go my errand, Monsieur. A doctor, quick! Likewise some brandy," suggesting: "You can buy it at a chemist's, I believe."

"Also a priest," murmurs the wounded woman, "the doctor will not aid me."

"The priest, also," begs the girl. "Get them all! I

will undress her. I am strong enough. Please go

quickly, for the love of mercy!"

Gazing on her innocent brown eyes that are now made more beautiful by womanly tenderness, and noting the childish graces of his petitioner, the coachman mutters to himself: "Tonnerre de Dieu, these cursed mouchards are chasing for a thief a sister of charity!" and so goes on his errand.

The moment the fellow has gone, the self-appointed nurse devotes herself to her patient; moistens the pallid brow with water, which she takes from a pitcher; fans the gasping lips with an open book, and, finally, attemps to remove the dress of the fainting woman. But, as she opens the bosom of the garment, and takes from the neck of her patient a little leather portemonnaie that is suspended from it by a narrow ribbon, there is revealed a gaping bullet hole. Then she pauses, dreading she may reopen the wound.

"Yes," says the woman faintly to her, "you can do me little good—though God bless you. I am bleed-

ing internally."

" No, no!"

"I am sure of it." Then, her hands fluttering slightly, she sighs: "My husband! Oh, grace de Dieu! My death will be cruel to him who hoped to feel my arms within this week."

"Your husband," whispers the girl, "he is not in Paris?"

"No. He is a lineman on the new railroad they are running from Genoa to Turin. I was to leave to-morrow to join him in far away Italy. I had just obtained my passport this afternoon, the one in the little pocket-book that is in your hand; I had been bidding some friends good-by, and, returning, was caught in the concourse in the Des Capucines. I could not get out of the awful crowd. Suddenly there came a volley of musketry, and I fled. I was knocked down and trampled on. Then there was another volley and singing bullets everywhere. I struggled to my feet and fled on, and

as I ran death came to me. Something stung my back—but what has happened? Where am I? Yes—I know now—in my room. Shot to death! Who will tell my poor Gaspard?"

"You mean your husband? Tell me his full name," asks the girl. "I will write to him if it is so bad—but

courage-you will recover!"

"No—I—I am dying now," sighs the wounded woman. "You'll—you'll find my name and his in that pocketbook—besides, *la concierge* can tell you. God bless you for your goodness. But for the love of God—the priest! Don't let me die without the priest!"

As if in irony to her petition come the words of the

returned coachman:

"Madame, I could not find a doctor. They are all out on the streets like the rest."

"Ah, but you have the brandy?"

"Yes, I got a flask of eau de vie, at the druggist's in the Rue d'Antin. They have two wounded men in there and three dead ones."

"Thank you for the liquor!" cries the girl, and a moment after pours some of it down the throat of the fainting woman, who now murmurs, almost despairingly: "The priest?"

"Diable! I forgot the priest," mutters the hackman,

in half apologetic tone.

"Oh, God forgive you!" gasps the sufferer. "You

can not save my body; do a little for my soul."

"Please, please, Monsieur, drive for a priest quick!" implores the self-appointed nurse excitedly, then suddenly pauses, and, looking at the agonized face of the dying woman, murmurs: "Too late! Too late for the priest!" For blood is flowing from the pale lips of the expiring creature, choking half uttered words.

Her fluttering hands are raised as if pleading to

Heaven.

With the quick impulse of convent education, the watcher suddenly plucks a rosary from her white neck, and places, with childlike faith, its cross upon the pal-

lid lips of the dying. Clinging to it, these kiss the emblem of our Redeemer; the face twitching with the agony of a departing soul, glows with hope of God, the glazing eyes grow calm; then with a little, quiet fluttering sigh they close.

Uttering a shuddering cry, the girl sinks on her knees beside the dead woman. The hackman, impressed by the presence of the King of Terrors, crosses himself, and mutters: "You will find me, Madame, down stairs, waiting for you," and with quiet feet leaves the room.

Three minutes after the girl stops her prayers, which have been offered up devoutly. Rising quietly, she gazes upon the thing of clay before her, and murmurs despairingly: "Your plight is better than mine; oh Heaven, if I were but you!" A moment later she almost staggers, and gasps, "I—I feel so faint!" The excitement of the affair having passed she remembers that she has not tasted food since morning.

With this she hurriedly swallows a little of the brandy the cabman had brought. The liquor seems to burn her throat; then surges through her veins, giving her new strength. Her eyes flash with the desperate courage of extreme youth before experience has taught the dangers of the world. She mutters hoarsely, but determinedly, "Now for myself!" then wrings her hands, and sighs: "Pursued as a criminal! Mon Dieu, if my poor dead mother saw me now!" Then bursting into childish tears she staggers from the presence of death.

CHAPTER II.

THE PASSPORT OF THE DEAD.

Two minutes later, the girl, wiping the tears from her blue eyes, steps into the room of *la concierge* to notify her of the death of her lodger. The woman has returned, but is in a state of drunken insensibility, and a little boy who is looking in from the street states that Mère Camouse has been carousing with her man of the National Guard, who, to-morrow, will get drunk in the Tuileries; adding, in juvenile patriotism: "Vive la Republique! Vive Egalité! Vive La Mort!"

Not heeding the chatter of the gamin, the young lady, hastily looking at a little jeweled watch, hangs the key of number twenty-six on the wall, then steps out on the

sidewalk.

Here she puts a delicate hand into the rough grasp of the waiting coachman, and makes him her friend by whispering: "Thank you, Monsieur, for being so good to her;" then adds, her voice very eager, "Now at top speed to Monsieur Perrier, Rue du Sentier!"

The next minute she is being rapidly driven to the house of the banker, for the coachman is growing anx-

ious to see the promised five hundred francs.

Rendered cautious by the episode of the Des Capucines, he does not again dare the main boulevards, but drives hurriedly through the Rues Provence and Richer to the Rue de Faubourg de Poissonnière, and by this, reaching the boulevard of that name, makes his way to the Rue du Sentier.

Here in an old-fashioned house lives an old-fashioned banker, who keeps his money counter under his eye night and day, living in apartments above his place of business. Fortunately it is not late, and there are still lights in the house.

The massive door being opened to her knock, the girl whispers to the old servitor: "Tell Monsieur Perrier that Madame la Baronne de Portalis wishes to see him immediately on business of importance."

Recognizing the visitor, the servant bows very low, and immediately ushers her into a small room that is

part office and part library.

"I will announce you to Monsieur Perrier," he says, and withdraws, as the girl sinks upon a sofa, making a pretty picture of despondency.

For convenience in her flight she has discarded the

long, dark veil of widowhood, and a pretty black hat is perched upon her locks of waving brown hair, that, under the lamp light, has occasional flickers of gold, which contrast strongly with the dress of crêpe, the bodice of which, after the fashion of the time, is laced tightly down the back, giving suggestions of graceful outlines that are just taking the glorious contours of exquisite womanhood. After the mode, the corsage is open at the throat to display a mass of snowy cambric and lace that shades the ivory neck of the young lady. Below the waist the *boufant* petticoats of the period extend the ample jupe that just permits a glimpse of a petite slipper, for in school-girl fashion Madame la Baronne has sat down upon one of her little feet.

As the girl muses despairingly, once or twice clinching her fingers in nervous agitation, her brown eyes light upon the pocketbook of the dead that, for safety, she

had attached by its little ribbon to her wrist.

"I must send this to the woman's husband," she thinks, and remembering she has been told that his address is within it, hurriedly opens it. It contains a letter written from Italy, which states that it incloses a draft to his dear Adele, for the expenses of her journey to Genoa, and is signed "Pierre Gaspard Pichoir." This draft has, apparently, been cashed, for there are a few hundred francs in bills and small money

in the pocketbook.

Besides this, there is a passport, "issued to Adele Eulalie Pichoir, occupation, seamstress, a French subject; age twenty-five, dark hair, black eyes, height five feet six inches; the wife of Pierre Gaspard Pichoir, also a French subject, attached to the Bureau of Construction of the Genoa and Turin Railway, his present home being Genoa. It permits her journey out of France, via Marseilles, to Italy. On being viséed by any French consul it allows the return of Adele Eulalie Pichoir to France."

"Yes, even in my own danger, even in my own misery, I can not forget this poor bereaved fellow. I will

write now," thinks the girl, and closing the pocketbook turns toward an open desk, but is interrupted by the entrance of an old gentleman of precise manner, but kindly mien.

Coming hurriedly in, he raises his eyebrows, and ejaculates: "My dear child, my poor Adrienne! You

out upon such a night as this?"

"Because it is such a night as this, I come to you," falters the young lady.

"Ah, yes! But how could your mother let you take

such a risk, and you just widowed?"

"My mother? You know my mother has been dead over a year."

"I mean your husband's mother. Of course she acts

as your mother now?"

At this the girl's eyes flash, as she stifles a bitter jeer by murmuring: "Oh, yes, of course, my mother-inlaw! I had forgotten her. In the political excitement of this awful day it is necessary that I get away from France. I fear the horrible scenes of the Terror will again take place in Paris. For this purpose, dear Monsieur Perrier, I need money."

"And the rest of your family, where are they, my

child?" queries the banker.

"The rest of my family need money also!" cries Adrienne, desperately, accepting his suggestion. "My mother-in-law, Madame de Portalis, even she of the adamantine commercial brain, is frightened. Her son, my late husband, the Baron Rayon de Portalis, received his title from the King they are now about to assault."

"Yes, yes. Of course I know your family history even better than you do, my child. Haven't I been the banker of your family for thirty years? I am perfectly aware that your husband was ennobled on account of his discoveries in regard to the manufacture of pottery. You have driven in this night from your home at Sèvres?"

"Yes, taking the chance of receiving a bullet. A

woman died by my side! She had been wounded in

the Boulevard des Capucines."

"Yes, I have just heard of that awful massacre," murmurs the man of finance. "To-morrow there will be more cruel scenes in the streets here. "Mon Dieu, if the rule of the Jacobins should come again! Yes, it is best that you leave this disturbed country for the present."

"For that purpose I am here to obtain from you a

small sum of money."

"How much do you wish?"

"Only sufficient to support us for a short time in a foreign country, until this trouble passes, or until we find means to make our bread in another land."

"Will fifteen thousand francs be enough?"

"Oh, too much!"

"My dear, you will find you can not have too much money. This sum I will advance you on your written acknowledgment. Of course, your settlements under your marriage contracts would secure me for an immensely larger sum. By the bye, has your husband's will been proved, my child?"

At this the young lady's face grows deathly pale; she

trembles in every limb.

Noting her agitation he goes on in hurried apology: "Pardon me. I don't wish to revive the memory of

your bereavement."

But she answers him: "My husband's will has not been proved;" then cries suddenly: "I have better security to offer you than my word—these trinkets! No, no, don't refuse them!" for Emile Perrier has made a dissenting gesture. "My property might be confiscated."

"Yes, we do not know what may happen in a revo-

lution in France," murmurs the banker.

"Therefore, I have brought you a few of my jewels," interjects the young lady. "I could not have you lose a sou for being my friend."

As she speaks Adrienne eagerly produces from the

pocket of her dress a diamond necklace, a few handsome rings and two bracelets, whose precious stones glitter in the subdued lamplight.

"I can not receive these;" again dissents the banker.

"These were your wedding presents from your dead

mother."

"How could they be better used than in saving the daughter's life? I beg you keep them; they will be safer in your hands than in mine. Perhaps in some happier day I may redeem them."

"Well, as you please," says the old man, who, though he has a generous heart, has also a business

brain.

Taking the baubles in his hands, he carefully inventories them, and remarks: "I will bring you the money," but even at the door of the apartment pauses, and brings consternation upon the girl, as he queries: "Your family are going with you?"

"My family? Oh-ah, yes-of course!" she stam-

mers.

"It will be necessary for you to have a passport. I will send for one for you."

"No, no!" cries Adrienne, desperately. "They

might be watching."

"Watching-who?"

"The agents of the-the rabble."

"I hardly think so yet. The King has not fled."

"Still it is not necessary for me to have a passport," gasps the young widow.

"Without one, you could not travel in a public con-

veyance a league."

"Yes, I have thought of that. I—I have a passport under a false name," she falters.

"Sapristi, a false passport?" gasps the astounded

banker.

"Yes. Adele Eulalie Pich—Pichoir. You see it is hard for me to remember my new cognomen. I am registered as a poor woman, traveling to join my husband in Italy."

"Grand Dieu!" murmurs the man of finance, rolling his old eyes. "What a bright child you have become."

"Yes, misery and terror have made me precocious," returns the girl, who, all the time, is muttering to herself in a childish way: "Holy Virgin, forgive my lies!"

"Then the passport matter being settled," remarks Emile Perrier, "I will lock these up in my safe, and get

you the money."

With the jewels in his hand he leaves the apartment, and Adrienne, sinking down on the sofa, a strange light flames in her childish eyes, she mutters to herself: "Accursed be they who bring despair upon me! Their atrocious accusations drive me to it!" Then sighs: "Heaven will forgive the deceit of a poor, hunted, desperate creature like me!"

With this, taking the passport from the portemonnaie, she reads it again very carefully, committing to memory the name and the statements in it. "This is God's gift to me," she thinks. "I am robbing no one; she is dead!"

A moment later the banker returns, bringing in his hands fourteen billets de banque, each of the denomination of a thousand francs. "Keep these on your person, my child," he suggests; then hands to her a number of smaller notes and some gold and silver. "This is the remainder of the money; to change the larger bills while traveling might be dangerous."

"Yes, yes, thank you. I understand," says the young

widow, rising to go.

But he intercepts her, commanding: "Not out of

my house to-night, my poor child."

"I must leave at once in order to go to-morrow," she mutters, desperately. "I—I have certain preparations to make that are necessary, dear Monsieur Perrier. But you can do me a favor. There is a trunk of my clothes my mother left with you upon my marriage. Could you not kindly have them send it to my waiting carriage?"

" Certainly."

"Then please do so at once."

Noting the anxiety in his client's eyes, the banker retires to give the necessary orders, while Adrienne hurriedly replaces her hat, that, in the excitement of the interview, has fallen from her fair head.

A moment later Emile Perrier, returning, remarks: "The trunk will be upon your coach very shortly. Still, I think your old clothes will be of little use to you; they are not the garments of mourning," adding deprecatingly: "But you are so young. You will wed again. You will forget."

"Wed again? Never!" and dashing the tears from her brown eyes, the widow sweeps to the door, a strange

shuddering protest in her graceful carriage.

"You will at least take some refreshment before you leave?" suggests Emile. "You look worn out, ma pauvre petite."

"No, no. I dare not stay. God bless you dear Monsieur Perrier!" And in childish gratitude Adrienne kisses the hand of the astounded banker, and runs out of his house.

On the sidewalk, she says hurriedly to the hackman, who has been anxiously awaiting her: "Here's the money I promised you. Please do a little more for me."

"Diable, I will drive my horses to death!" answers the cocher cheerily, and kisses the five hundred franc bill with great smacking lips.

"Then you must take me back to the Rue Joubert."

"Yes. You—you won't betray me?"

"To betray you now would be to put my own wrists in the handcuffs," mutters the man. "Besides, you

pay good money."

So Adrienne again passes through Paris in a ferment. Even at this time of night the streets are full of excited men and shouting boys; patrols of the National Guard march hurriedly about, apparently, in an aimless manner, fraternizing with the mob. The police seem

to have disappeared, even from the main boulevards; the theaters are dark, the girl noting in the Montmartre that the *Variétés* has "*Relache*" posted upon its portals.

At No. 45 Rue Joubert, to her relief, the fugitive finds la concierge is still in the drunken insensibility of

her debauch.

"You must wait for me," she whispers to the hackman, as she takes the key from the wall.

"Diable! The woman's room? You are not afraid

of the dead?"

"No, it is the living that I fear," answers the young widow, though her hands tremble nervously, as her

light form disappears up the narrow stairs.

Ten minutes after, the hackman, dozing on his box, cries angrily: "Who the deuce are you, trying to get into my carriage?" and jumps into the street. Here he gasps astonished: "Diable, little one! You are no more the aristocrate. You are—nom de Dieu!—in the clothes of the dead one."

"Yes, it is safer for me," whispers Adrienne. Then her fragile figure sways; she places her little hand on the wheel of the *coupé* to support herself.

"Morbleu, you are fainting!" The man lifts her light form quite tenderly, and places the girl upon the

seat of the carriage.

Here, as he holds the door open, the moon shines upon her pale, childish face. The street is deserted, though the low murmur of the excited populace upon the great boulevards comes faintly to them, and the two hold converse. Adrienne, half reclining, falters: "It—it was more trying than I expected. Her dead face seemed to look upon me as I robed myself in her garments." But, after a moment, recovering herself, she goes on, an anxious tremor in her sweet voice: "Now I must ask your advice. I am not accustomed to being a fugitive. I wouldn't know how to evade the police."

"You are a criminal?"

[&]quot;No, no. Falsely accused!"

"Ciel! It is lucky for you there is a revolution in Paris to-night. Had it been even yesterday they would have had your little white thumbs tied together by this time. But now the Bureau de Sûreté is topsy turvey. Its accursed officers tremble for themselves in the Rue de Jérusalem. Even old Vidocq is shivering, fearing the guillotine may hack off his well-hated neck and his sly old head fall into the basket. Everyone remembers the good old Jacobin days of '93. That gives you your chance."

"Yes, yes," cries the girl, who in her childish ignorance of the world dares things a more mature mind would deem impossible—escape from the most perfect bureau of information and accurate certainty of pursuit the world has ever known. "Tell me how to dupe them; how I can leave Paris."

"Leave Paris? Diable, you must have a passport!"

" Already obtained."

"Mon Dieu! A true one?" gasps the man, opening his eyes very wide.

" No a false one."

"To go which way?"

"South. The railway to Lyons has not been yet

opened.* I must take the diligence."

"Sapristi! At the office of the diligence they will be awaiting you and will surely nab you, my little one," remarks the hack driver. Then passing his hand through his unkempt hair, after a moment he suggests: "Git out as if you were going to the suburbs; then take a side road, and catch the diligence outside of town." A moment later he mutters: "I have the trick. Take the steamboat to Montereau. You have the money?"

"Plenty."

"That's good. But you need not fear. I am not avaricious. I will only charge you another hundred francs. I will drive you to-morrow down to the Quai de la Greve; at the office, No. 60, you will take a ticket

^{*}The railway to Lyons and Marseilles was not opened even as far as Chalons till 1849.—ED.

for Montereau. We'll get there when the populace are storming the Tuileries. The clerks will be thinking more of stray cannon balls than their business. They won't pay much attention to your passport. From Montereau you take a private coach to Troyes; then mount the diligence for Lyons, and there you are!"

"Yes, yes, God bless you!" excitedly cries Adrienne, clapping her hands almost childishly, though a moment after her voice grows faint as she murmurs: "Now, you must take me where I can get something to eat. I've—I've had nothing since morning. Besides, I must

have some place to sleep. I-I am so tired."

"You may trust me for that Madamoiselle. I know the very place! Old Mother Grenouile will give you a meal and a clean bed, and ask no questions. She takes care of such stray police chickens as you quite often. Parbleu, but you were lucky when you picked me up after your carriage had broken down on the Passy road. I am the one cocher in a hundred who would not have robbed you of your money, and then turned you over to the police. But do not be afraid. I will charge you only two hundred francs for all I am doing for you."

"Yes! God bless you again!" says the girl, piteously.
"By the bye! What am I to call you to Mother

Grenouile?"

"Adele Pich—I forget the name—Adele Pichoir, that's it—Adele Pichoir, seamstress."

"Then petite," laughs the man, "you had better put out of sight that little watch with the coronet upon it. Ah! Now we are more in form. You are married, I can see by the gold ring on your finger?"

"Yes, I am journeying to meet my husband in Italy."

"Diable, you have been studying your passport," chuckles the fellow. "Now, we'll make you as safe for the night as if Monsieur Vidocq had you and you were locked up in La Conciergerie." At this hideous pleasantry, the fugitive shivers.

He is turning to mount his hack, when a little hand is laid in piteous entreaty upon his arm, a fair face,

strangely beautiful in the moonlight, looks into his, and a soft voice petitions: "For the love of God, Monsieur, remember you are a man, and do not betray a helpless, despairing woman."

"Diable! Do not doubt me, little one," answers the cocher. "I am the most honest hackman in Paris!"

And the fellow means it, as he whips up his tired horses and drives briskly into one of the out-of-the-way quarters of Paris, whose populace is now sharpening sword and cleaning pistol and musket and piling cobblestones to dethrone its King.

CHAPTER III.

THE MONTEREAU BOAT.

It is the next day—that fateful twenty-fourth of February, 1848. Paris is a living hell. The crowds are storming the Tuileries. The citizen king is flying from his citizens. The musketry is rolling heavily from the few troops who still hold firm about the palace. One solid, howling, yelling, shouting Parisian mob, is jammed into the Place de Carrousel, the gardens of the Tuileries and the Rue de Rivoli, which at this time ends at the Louvre. The quays, however, along the river bank, are not as thickly crowded, there being a report that a battery is placed ready to enfilade them with its fire.

Upon the steps of the Hotel de Ville, apparently waiting for some one or something, stands a young man, of fine figure, and dark, serious eyes that are now flashing, not only with excitement, but resolution. His manner has a curious, precise dignity for one so young, as if he were accustomed to command anything from a regiment of cavalry to a class of schoolgirls.

He stands gazing upon the crowded Place de la Greve, an eager expectancy making his lips quiver

slightly under a long, well-waxed, dark mustache, which has a military, almost theatrical twirl, to its ends. Costumed for traveling, his high-booted foot is beating an impatient tattoo on the stone step upon which he stands. Once or twice, as the roll of musketry comes to him from the direction of the scene of tumult, he strikes his hands nervously together, and mutters: "Will Cremieux never come? Gran Dio! Louis Philippe dethroned, the Austrians have one friend less, Italy one chance more." Then he cries, cordially: "Thank God, you are here, Alphonse!" to a young man in the uniform of a Captain of the National Guard, who, forcing his way through the throng, stands beside him. "What is your news?"

"We have done it!" whispers the French captain.

"God be praised! You are sure?"

"Oh, certain, my Italian friend! There goes the last cannon of the heroic Gerard; a brave man defending a King who runs away."

"Louis Philippe has fled?" queries the other, as if he

could scarce believe.

"Sure! His carriage was seen to drive away nearly an hour ago, and thank God, the colonel in command of the troops, through which he passed, had the sense to let him fly. *Parbleu*, they say, he is already under an assumed name, possibly some cognomen of the English whom he loves. He is the last King in France, mark you that!"

"Then I must get on my way, Cremieux," whispers the other. "This news means an uprising in Italy."

"Don't talk here! Mille diables, there may be spies about, Da Messina," mutters the Frenchman.

So the two get to a quiet place and hold converse to-

gether.

"I leave for Milan immediately," remarks the Italian, under his breath. "Giuseppe Mazzini will be in Paris within two days. Give him any further news, but it is necessary that Lombardy and Venice know at once there is no King, who is a friend to Austria, in France,"

"Yes! I see you are ready to travel." And young Cremieux glances at a valise the Italian carries in his hand.

"I have been ready to depart for three weeks. You know I have been waiting here over two months. I can trust you, my dear Alphonse, because no man in Paris has been a truer friend to me. You will present my

compliments to your great relative?"

"Ma foi, my great relative is even now taking part in the provisional government in the Chamber of Deputies," replies the other with French vivacity. "Sauzet, when he rose in the Chamber to assume the office of President, said: 'I call the Deputies to order.' And a sans-culotte, covering him with a big musket cried: 'The Republic calls upon you to resign.' 'I resign!' screamed Sauzet, and fled through a trapdoor in the rostrum which he had prepared to the catacombs of underground Paris. Perhaps he is even now crawling through a sewer beneath our feet!" At this the two burst out laughing merrily.

- A moment later the Italian speaks hurriedly and se-

riously:

"This thing that I have waited for having come to pass, I must return at once to Milan."

"You have a passport?"

"Of course! But not a French passport. One issued by the Austrian government in my native city, permitting me, the Cavaliere, Carlo Tomasso da Messina, teacher of music, to take journey to Paris, and return with an apprenticed pupil, one Estelle Gabrielle Chartres, aged sixteen, who is to be prepared by me for the stage of the Opera—that is the trouble!"

"What is the trouble?"

"My pupil, the girl I was to take with me, to be placed under my direction at the school of my aunt in Milan! These political commotions have frightened the child's parents, who, though poor as church mice for some time, hesitated to place their daughter under the stern rule of Italian padroneship. Even with the

papers already drawn up, they now refuse to let Estelle travel to Italy, where we will have much more deadly work than has been necessary here." He points almost sneeringly toward the Tuileries. "So I am without a pupil. Now, the bringing of this girl to Milan was the sole apparent object of my visit to Paris. To return without my apprentice will add to the suspicions which the Austrian government already have of me."

"Mille tonnerres! you were not very wise, my friend. Why did you not state to the Milan authorities that you had an engagement at the Paris Opera, my tenor? That would have been more astute than the excuse of the

girl," remarks Alphonse.

"That was impossible," answers the other. "The Opera House of Paris is very close, artistically, to La Scala, Milan. My contract would have to have been a genuine one, and, as is usual, for a stated period. Then I could not have left on the moment, as I do now. Besides, I was assured Mademoiselle Chartres would be regularly apprenticed to me here, and leave with me at my command."

"Parbleu!" laughs the young Frenchman. "Why not take Julie, or Cora, or Mimi? La belle Mimi is quite enamored of you. She'd masquerade as a girl of sixteen; she would travel to Italy with you, and enjoy the rôle. Diable! I see la petite Mimi donning short schoolgirl skirts and playing your pupil of sixteen, with that arch, childlike grace, that devilish innocence that makes the bald heads in the fauteuils d'orchestre at the Palais Royal chuckle till their old hearts throb as if they were boys again."

"Peste!" interjects Da Messina. "The liberty of my country is too solemn to be sullied by an amour with a soubrette. And yet, I must go today!" The determination in his voice is tinged with anxiety, though not conquered by it. "Every minute is important now. Within a month we will answer your guns in free Paris by our musketry in free Milan; remember that! And yet, without the girl, I know not

how to make my return to Italy look plausible. However," the confidence of youth lighting his expressive face, "trust me to pull the wool over the eyes of the Austrian officials on the Lombardian frontier in some

way."

"Remember," says Cremieux, warningly, "that we have word here—at least so Monsieur Barrot informed me only last night—that there are several Austrian spies now in Paris, seeing how this affair will turn out. One or two of them are ladies; perhaps especially picked out, knowing your predilection for the fair sex, my dear Cavaliere da Messina!"

"Basta! In matters of politics, women are no more to me than chessmen are to the player," mutters the other, adding, coolly: "For my country, I would wring the neck of Madame Spy as quickly as I would cut the

throat of Monsieur Mouchard!"

"Ah, yes! You have the old principles of the Car-

bonari," smiles the Frenchman.

"No, only the aspirations of 'Young Italy.' We are all ready to move, I tell you, Cremieux. Charles Albert has fifty thousand men on the Piedmont frontier to aid us; Garibaldi is raising a group of free Italians in Naples; Venice, under Manin, is ready to rise, and my beloved Milan will not be far behind her."

"Then you are going?" queries Alphonse, for the

other is already moving toward the river front.

"Yes!"

"By the diligence to Lyons?"

"No. I take no diligence from Paris. Though a young man, I am too old a conspirator for that. My movements were arranged for me by your great relative, a man with a long head. He said: 'Take the boat as far as Montereau, my dear Da Messina. They will not be thinking to-day of tourists doing the upper Seine. There I engage a private chaise and post to Troyes. From that point, of course, the diligence to Lyons; but I don't imagine any lady spy will think I journey that rather roundabout way to Marseilles and Genoa."

"So there will be no more petits soupers with you at the Café de Paris, or our little dinners de quartre, two ladies and two gentlemen, at Very's. Diable, I shall miss your beautiful voice, but your company much more, my dear Chevalier! La petite Mimi will be inconsolable," prattles the young Frenchman, vivaciously, though the musketry is still rolling about the Tuileries.

"Yes," answers the other, solemnly. "No man thoroughly appreciates Paris till he is leaving it. There's no city like it on this earth!" He sighs slightly, perchance thinking of la belle Mimi, who is as piquant a soubrette as ever looked undying love at a man and didn't mean it. "Shall I say good-by, now, my dear Alphonse?" They are at the Quai de Greve—the young Italian holds out his hand affectionately.

"No, not yet! I will bid you adieu at the boat."

With this they take their way rapidly to the quay below the bridge Louise Philippe, where one of the little steamers running to Montereau is tied up. Her funnel is belching black smoke. She, apparently, is ready to depart. One or two of the deckhands are waving the passengers, who are not very numerous, across her gangplank.

"Quick! You have just time to get your ticket, Da Messina," cries Cremieux, and the two young men run hastily to the office of the steamboat company, where the excited clerks, urged to a Gallic madness by the tumult that comes faintly to their ears from further down the Seine, pay very little attention to the exami-

nation of passports.

One is just taking some money from a woman garbed quite humbly in a plain, brown dress, and crying: "Ticket for Madame Pichoir; passport examined!" He scarce looks at the latter document, for at this time a shout comes from a lounger outside: "Mon Dieu! Cannon are coming upon the Quai near the Palace!"

"Tell the Captain to get under way at once. I am going to Montereau with him!" screams the manager of the office, running out. "But you clerks stay here

and attend to business; the next boat will be crowded!" he adds sternly to his attachés, who would follow him.

In the midst of this excitement Da Messina comes out of the office with his ticket in his hand, Cremieux walking hastily beside him. As they run down to the little steamboat, the latter remarks, half jestingly: "See, my Carlo, in front of you the female spy."

"What do you mean?" asks the other, in hurried

suspicion.

"Why, that young lady in advance of us."

"That young lady?"

"Yes. She who wears the garments of a work-woman with the grace of an aristocrat. I caught her face under her big bonnet; it is that of as pretty a girl as I have ever looked at; not over eighteen. I read her passport as it lay open on the counter, and it said married woman, twenty-five. Diable, look at that high-bred foot; it's not shod in philosophes at fifty sous a pair, I can tell you. Those high heels came from a Jordan or a Ferry, and cost a couple of louis at least. Sapristi, Mademoiselle may be some princess in disguise," laughs the Frenchman. "Anyway, she is worth investigating, Da Messina, either from the stand-point of politics or the tender passion."

"Cielo!" whispers the Italian. "I believe she really is a spy. See how she shrinks from observation; note that her dress is much too large for her slight waist. Cospetto, how familiarly that hackman, carrying her trunk, chuckles to her as she steps upon the boat."

"Oho!" interjects Alphonse, "I know the fellow." A moment later, he whispers: "Listen! The hackman has just mentioned Mother Grenouile to the girl."

"Mother Grenouile! Who is she?" asks Carlo, hur-

riedly.

"Come this way, and I will tell you," for the two are now upon the gangplank, across which the last passengers are crowding, a booming cannon down the river adding to their haste. On the deck of the boat, drawing his friend as far as possible from other people's ears, Cremieux whispers warningly: "Camille Grenouile is well known to most boulevardiers as a woman who keeps a lodging house in which people under a cloud take refuge. The suspects of the police; ladies of shady reputations of all kinds are her lodgers. Beware, my dear Da Messina, of any woman who knows Mère Grenouile! Our suspect is certainly not couleur blanche. Camille's is the very house a female spy of the Austrian government might lodge in."

Thanks for your warning, my dear Alphonse. Were I impeded in my journey to Milan it would be a blow to our cause," whispers the Italian, casting a wary eye upon the shrinking form of Adrienne de Portalis, who, clothed as the seamstress Adele Pichoir, is trying most anxiously to avoid the eyes of a little gendarme, who in full uniform, has just stepped upon the deck.

"Good-by, old fellow! Pray God that you may return to us soon from Italy alive," ejaculates Cremieux, for the cry is "All ashore!"

The two young men embrace heartily. The Frenchman tears himself away, and springs rapidly to the quai, as the steamer's gangplank is taken in, and turning her head up stream the little vessel darts past the Isle Saint Louis, and, leaving Charenton to her left, breasts the current, paddling rapidly toward the upper reaches of the river.

Every revolution of the boat's wheels takes it farther from the wild roar of the mob, triumphant now and looting the Tuileries as they testify their hatred of monarchy by destroying the art treasures of half a dozen centuries.

Seating himself carelessly near the stern of the boat, and lighting a cigar, the Cavaliere da Messina makes a rather languidly romantic picture, as in the confidence of youth he hums, most exquisitely, a little Italian ditty, though all the time he gives a concealed yet earn-

est attention to the woman against whom he has been warned.

Every attitude of the shrinking girl increases his suspicions. "She is certainly a consummate actress, or some one journeying under very peculiar circumstances," he concludes. Inspection makes the object of his distrust more interesting to him, as the ill-made robe can not conceal a most attractive figure, and a very capacious poke bonnet can not keep wholly from his prying eyes a very lovely and exceedingly youthful face.

Suddenly, to increase his misgivings, the object of his inspection comes quite close to him, as if she sought

his company.

This is simply because the Cavaliere da Messina appears, to the girl's appealing gaze, the most gentlemanly man on the boat, in fact, the only one to whom Adrienne, in a moment of necessity, might turn for succor from some of the rude gang who occupy most of the deck of the steamer. These are mostly tradesmen of the lower classes, who fear the flying bullets of revolutionary Paris; a number of millers who are returning to their cornmills at Melun and Corbiel, as well as a few farmers and red-shirted butchers for Montereau. likewise some uncouth shepherds and cattle dealers journeying to the Forest d'Othe. The almost brutal attentions of some of these to a woman of pretty face and humble dress are such as drive the frightened girl as far as possible from her would-be gallants, the bulk of whom are at the forward end of the boat. Consequently Adrienne moves nearer to the stern, and therefore closer to Carlo da Messina, who suddenly has an idea that the pretty spy, for as such he now almost regards her, desires to have word with him in order to make her surveillance over him more close and effective.

So he sits quietly smoking, keeping one eye upon the beautiful banks of the Seine, which become more hilly and picturesque as they reach its higher waters, and the other upon the attractive object of his suspicions—wait-

ing for a dénouement, which he now confidently expects will take place. But this does not occur until the journey is nearly closed. It is already late in the afternoon and is growing toward dusk. The boat has passed Corbiel, Melun, and Fontainebleau, and is nearing her destination, the little town of Montereau, when Signor da Messina gives a start.

A sweet voice is whispering, almost in his ear: "Oh, Monsieur! I beg your protection when we land; that you will conduct me to the inn. I am alone and unprotected. You are the only one whose bearing and appearance permits me to petition. I will only trouble you till we reach the inn."

With a slight start, Carlo, turning, sees a pair of beautiful, anxious, brown eyes, and hears a voice of wonderful sweetness and exquisite timbre making appeal to a heart, that is now a very hard one toward this young lady, and a mind that is decidedly distrustful, even of her beauty and her graces. For the Cavaliere is thinking to himself: "Curse the little cunning intrigante! With the art of a thorough police spy, she is making the only appeal to me that, as a gentleman, I can not refuse." He has just noticed that the little gendarme has passed a few words with the lovely petitioner. As a matter of fact, Adrienne's appeal is owing to the amorous arts of this dapper little policeman, who, strutting about in his gorgeous uniform, has sought to make a conquest of the retiring girl, the few marketwomen on board not being considered worthy subjects for his gallantry. This official, after many ogles, some sighs, and a good deal of bombast, having noticed that Adrienne's eyes, when they meet his, shrink from his impudent glances, thinks he has made a conquest. Therefore, the boat being near its destination, he struts up to the trembling young lady and addresses her in these horrifying words: "Remember, Mademoiselle, when we reach Montereau, on the gangplank I shall take you under my arm, as a representative of the Police of Paris." This audacious speech has given

La Baronne de Portalis an awful fright. For one instant she thinks that her disguise has been discovered; that the ogling creature before her is a myrmidon of the Bureau de Sûreté. A moment later his words give her mind a great relief—her modesty a fearful shock. He whispers: "Corps de diable! I will show you, my pretty one, how we love in Paris."

Unaccustomed to guard herself in public, having always had either the protection of a mother or the care of a husband, and always shielded by the surroundings of wealth and station, the girl sees only one relief from this attack, and that is to place herself under the protection of one who, though he looks a man of the world,

seems also to be a gentleman.

"Yes, I will take you to the inn," replies the cavaliere, shortly, though he lifts his hat ceremoniously.

"Thank you, thank you, Monsieur! It is that

gendarme that I fear."

"Humph, yes! I noticed that he was talking to you," remarks Carlo, pointedly, and thinks: "When I get into my postchaise at Montereau, Donna *Intrigante*, though she will doubtless try to follow me, will be compelled to take her prying eyes off me for a little time. *Diavolo*, but they are very beautiful and pathetic—hang me, they look as if they had been crying—for my benefit, I suppose. What a consummate little actress she is."

To avoid the temptation of her glance, he turns his face from her, and, the mood coming on him, sings under his voice, his humor being sad, a *petite chanson* of Beranger's—one *la belle* Mimi used to warble—the echo of his past *amourette* in Paris.

As he finishes, he is startled by the lady of his fears whispering: "How—how beautifully you sing, yet how sadly." He notes the lovely eyes are again full of

tears.

"Yes, I am considered something of a tenor in Italy," he returns, complacently. Even great artists have an appetite for compliments. But as he speaks a savage

distrust flies into his face, for this girl of humble garb is wiping her brown eyes with a kerchief of finest cambric, its corner broidered with a little coronet.

"Cospetto!" he thinks. "Even the most cunning of these lady mouches have some slight rent in their

armor of deceit."

Anxious to test her a little farther, he carelessly makes a remark in German. To his horror she answers him with a delightful Viennese accent, explaining, apparently, as an afterthought, that she studied the language in her convent school.

They have rounded the last bend of the river-Mon-

tereau is in sight.

"Monsieur, I—I remind you of your promise," whispers the suspect, gazing tremblingly at the gendarme, who has posted himself near the gangway.

"I am at your service, Mademoiselle," answers Carlo,

formally.

"Madame, please!" responds the girl. "I am Adele Pichoir, journeying to my husband in Italy, via Marseilles."

"By Heavens!" thinks Da Messina, with a start.
"This female Vidocq has discovered my very route."

A moment after, the boat drawing up at the landingplace, the cavaliere offers his arm with studied politeness to the woman by his side, and leads her across the gangplank, the dapper gendarme gazing after him and cursing him under his breath, though afraid to dispute the prize with a stalwart fellow who looks not only able to break him in two and throw him into the river, but also extremely cross and very savage.

For, though the little white, clinging hand laid upon his stout arm might, in its helpless appeal, make any man feel very tender toward her, Carlo da Messina is looking upon the lady he escorts, muttering to himself, a very dangerous gleam in his eye: "Beware, my little Austrian police spy! I am warned of you. You follow

me at your peril!"

CHAPTER IV.

A CURIOUS NIGHT RIDE.

Five minutes' walk and Carlo da Messina, accompanied by Madame la Baronne de Portalis, reaches the Cheval Blanc, a little inn which is also the posthouse of the town.

Here, bowing courteously, the gentleman says: "I must now leave you, Madame," and striding hastily out of the parlor of the *auberge*, he orders a postchaise at once to take him to Troyes.

"Morbleu, you are lucky!" answers the innkeeper. "You have ordered the last in our stables. There has been quite a travel of ladies and gentlemen who have to-day fled from Paris, from which they tell me the King has run away. The next one who orders a carriage will find he has to remain over night."

"That you have one left is fortunate," replies the cavaliere. "I am anxious to get on my way as soon as possible. So have the horses put in at once, and serve a little dinner in your dining-room—anything will do—whatever you have cooked, and a bottle of chablis"

Three minutes after Carlo sits down to a meal very hastily served, but finds himself made comfortable by a cold chicken, bread, butter, and cheese, and a bottle of quite fair wine.

Apparently, the lady spy is in a hurry also, for the girl whom he dreads is likewise taking a hasty meal in another portion of the room, from which she once or twice looks up at him with a gratitude he thinks suspicious. A moment later, in the courtyard, as he is about to step into his postchaise, the innkeeper comes to him.

"Monsieur, I have taken a great liberty. A woman is also anxious to proceed to Troyes. I have given her a seat in your carriage. She said it was an affair of

life and death. I didn't think you would object, as you had escorted her from the boat, and—she is very pretty!" There is a sly twinkle in the old *aubergiste's* eye.

"The woman I escorted from the boat?"

"Yes. Though humbly dressed she seems to have plenty of money to pay the high post charges of sixtyfive miles to Troyes; she will divide the expense with you."

"Plenty of money!" cogitates the Italian conspirator. "Yet her passport, Alphonse told me, was that of a seamstress. She is dressed as a workingwoman. She inadvertently used a coronetted handkerchief. She speaks South-German. She is surely an Austrian agent. Maladetto, she will have it!"

Then like a man of determination, turning to the aubergiste, he remarks in blandest tone: "Certainly, innkeeper, place the lady in the postchaise. She will be a pleasant companion for the ride—of course, she shares the expense with me?"

Upon which Adrienne, coming hurriedly out, falters: "Thank you, Monsieur, for another favor to my helplessness. Had it been anybody else I would not have dared to trust myself with him alone in a carriage, but I can tell from your face, Monsieur, that the weakness of a woman with you adds to her safety."

"Diavolo! What a cunning little devil she is," mutters Carlo to himself; then replies, a strange significance in his voice: "I hope you will enjoy the journey," and assists the young lady with formal deference into the postchaise, seating himself beside her.

They are about to drive away when the innkeeper, hastily running up to their carriage, says: "Your passports, please? This upturning of the government has made me forgetful."

Adrienne is hastily and nervously seeking for her paper as the cavaliere hands his to the man.

Glancing at it, the fellow grins, and remarks

"Ventre bleu! A little comedy of Monsieur's! Mademoiselle is your apprentice?" then calls cheerily: "Drive on, boys!"

And the postilions whipping up, the chaise rolls out of the courtyard of the *Cheval Blanc*, Adrienne gazing astounded both at her unexamined passport and her

compagnon de voyage.

"They thought you were my apprenticed pupil," remarks Carlo. "Permit me"—he glances at the open paper, and reading there "Adele Pichoir, age twenty-five, seamstress," he turns his eyes upon the lady's white hand, and noting her delicate fingers show no needle marks, his face grows dark; he has no further doubt that a spy sits beside him.

With this, sudden resolution comes to him. The object of his journey being disclosed to the Austrian government will not only mean his instant arrest when he reaches Lombardy, but perhaps the seizure of arms vital to the success of the insurrection. He is determined that, when the tocsin sounds, he must be

free to fight the battles of his country.

"She has forced herself upon me," he reflects.
"Upon her devilish head be it!" and gives her a
threatening glance, as the carriage rumbles out of the
little town and goes up hill and down dale, nearly following the line of excavation of the railroad that is in

process of completion.

It is growing dark. The road is lonely. The sleepy postboys are scarce thinking of what they are doing, when astonishment, dismay, and horror come in awful shock to Adrienne de Portalis. The man in the carriage with her suddenly draws down the blinds of the vehicle. Before she can speak he seizes her white throat in one hand, and with the other flashes a gleaming stiletto over her heart, snarling: "Austrian spy, one word from your false lips; one movement of your hands, and you are dead! Make no resistance!"

So, holding her, and she being under fear of death from this man, who must be a robber who has dis-

covered she has money about her, Carlo da Messina, forcing his handkerchief between her red lips, which are now growing pale with terror, and her pearly teeth that chatter as if she had the ague, he ties it behind her head, gagging her.

Then, quickly taking her own scarf, he binds her little fluttering wrists together securely behind her back, and places her on the seat in front of him, muttering, in

hoarse menace: "Move, Jezebel, and you die!"

And so they ride on into the night that is growing deeper, he apparently meditating to what horrible fate he will put his victim, while all the time the staring eyes of his captive, perhaps made more beautiful by flashes of wild agony in their brown depths, gaze upon him as if asking: Does this ferocious bandit mean only murder, or, perhaps, even a greater horror, to the helpless girl whose life he holds within his brutal hands?

But Carlo is debating not what to do, but how to do it; *i. e.*, to place this woman who has dogged his steps where she will do him and his cause—Italian liberty, that he deems much more sacred than his safety—any further harm.

"This devil's passport, permitting her to journey to Genoa via Marseilles, shows that she intended to follow me to Italy, doubtless there to give such information to the Austrian authorities that, added to the suspicions they already have of me, means, at the very best, solitary confinement in an Austrian fortress. Curse her!" he cogitates. "She shall not make a Silvio Pellico of me. No oubliette of the Spielbergh Fortress for Carlo da Messina! In this crisis of my country my hands must be unfettered to fight for Italy!"

Turning it over in his mind, he sees no way to permit this woman to live and be safe himself. He is striving to bring himself to the awful resolve, to poniard her and throw her body out of the carriage in the darkness, though he dare not do this until the next stage. Their postilions have seen the woman enter the carriage with him. At change of horses, new postboys

will take their places, and, with the blinds drawn down, will hardly notice the chaise has two people in it; then he must act!

But even as he strives to bring his mind to take the necessary action, his whole being revolts at the cruel deed. He can not help pitying the creature he is about to sacrifice upon what he considers the altar of Italian liberty. The girlish face that had looked in such childish pathos into his will come into his imagination. Besides, as he sternly bound her, some inkling of the lithe beauty and exquisite graces of that youthful figure, which struggled so piteously under his strong arm, had come to his acute senses. It bore no passion with it; his mind had been intent only upon his safety, but an innate artistic sense of the beauty he is about to sacrifice lingers in his imagination.

So he thanks God the darkness does not permit him to more than discern dimly the slight, helpless figure, that sways to and fro with every jolt of the lumbering coach, and that the gloom prevents his seeing no more than the outline of the pretty, muffled head whose eyes, even in the darkness, seem to flash with despair into his as he awaits the time when he must act, for they will shortly be at the next posthouse, and after they have changed horses and new postilions have mounted, the girl must die.

But while he is thinking, Adrienne's mind, which has recovered from the first dazed horror of his sudden attack, now notes that she has not yet been robbed, and remembers that this man, as he seized her, called her an Austrian spy.

Therefore, very shortly after this, the cavaliere starts, astonishment coming unto him, for a little foot is kicking his own in a trembling, half-hearted kind of a way. He gazes at the girl, and sees that she has crossed her ankles and extended them toward him. Seeing that he has noticed this, Adrienne presents her two helpless hands bound behind her back. This she does twice before he understands.

He whispers: "You wish me to tie your feet so I dare unbind your hands?"

The muffled head nods to him.

"Basta! I were a coward if I could not trust a weak girl that far!" thinks the man.

In a moment he has bound the trembling feet together and cautiously released one hand of the captive. The next instant he starts as the delicate fingers clutch in the darkness a gold pencil case that, in the afternoon, Adrienne had noticed attached to his watch chain.

"Sapristi! little devil, you wish to write?"

The muffled head nods again. In a moment he produces his pocketbook, and striking a lucifer match from the box he carries for convenience as a smoker, the following curious interview, illumined by the sharp flashes of the lucifers, takes place.

The girl writes in trembling, yet hurried characters:

"I am not a spy."

"Impossible! Don't lie to me!"
"God help me; it is the truth!"

"Then who are you?" he whispers to her.

"I am the most unfortunate woman in the world."

"I can well believe that," mutters the cavaliere, grimly, "unless you prove to me that you are not what I suspect. Your name?"

"Adele Pichoir, seamstress."

"Don't lie any more! Your dainty fingers show no marks of the needle; your handkerchief bears a coronet; your outer dress is that of a workingwoman, but your skirts are cambric decked with lace, and your shoes, my friend Cremieux, who admires pretty feet, informs me are in the first fashion, and must have cost at least two louis d'ors."

"Holy Virgin, pity me!" writes the girl. "Must I

tell you the truth?"

"If you wish to live, yes!" he replies. "And quickly! Now, your true name!"

"I am Adrienne La Baronne de Portalis."

"Then why the assumed name and false passport?"

"I am a fugitive!"

"A fugitive!" sneers the cavaliere. "From whom—your husband? I can see by your ring you are married!"

"No. I am a widow!"

"Then from whom do you fly? Answer as you value your life."

"From-Oh, Monsieur, for the love of God do not

betray me-from the police."

" Diavolo!"

"But I am innocent."

"Of course! But I can not listen just now to your very suspicious story. I see the lights of the posthouse just ahead of us. Only remember, you have nothing to fear from me if you are not an Austrian mouche, whose report would mean my ruin. But, until I am sure, please give me your hand—at once!" for the captive hesitates.

Though this man's manner is somewhat softened and his voice is not as harsh as it had been, there is something in his attitude that seems to compel the young widow's obedience. She falteringly extends to him her delicate wrist, which is immediately bound to the other. Then he rapidly mutters: "Excuse me," in somewhat more tender tone, and, draping her with a long traveling cloak he has with him, seats her in the far away corner of the chaise on the opposite side to the lights of the posthouse, as they dash up to it.

"Just remain quiet," he whispers, and I will hear the rest of your tale after we are on our way again. Then, putting his head out of the carriage window, he promptly declines proffered refreshment from the

keeper of the house.

Ten minutes after they are on the road again, new postboys riding in advance. The darkness has scarce closed about them, before Adrienne finds her hands unbound, and, to her relief, the gag taken from her mouth.

"I will trust you this far," he says. "Now tell me

your story, and do not forget that if you convince me of its truth you shall receive from me not only ample apology, but any aid I can give you in the calamity which you say has come upon you."

"Must I tell everything?"

"Everything, as you hope for mercy from me."

"Then," the girl's voice is very pleading now, "I am, as I told you, Adrienne La Baronne de Portalis. My father, who died when I was an infant, was a Parisian banker, Cesar Rammeau, who left behind him quite a fortune, that is now settled upon me, and which. I believe, has increased materially. My mother, God bless her, Cora Rammeau, though in certain points a weak woman, loved me very tenderly. I was educated at the convent school of the Dames du Sacré Cœur, Rue de la Santé, Paris. At eighteen I was taken from the convent to be married to the late Baron Rayon de Portalis, a gentleman I had never seen, and old enough to be more than my father. Of course, I could not love him, though I respected him, and he was very kind to me. Shortly after the wedding my dear mother died and left me surrounded by a family who, I think, hate me."

"Your dead husband?"

"No-his mother and his brother. His mother is a horrible commercial miser. My husband, a man of trade, was ennobled nearly twenty years ago for his discoveries in the manufacture of potteries which have been declared of national importance. Therefore, he was always a tradesman, but he was very kind to me, until he, not much more than two weeks ago, died, From that time my life has been a Hades. His relations wished his money; they wanted mine, too. By the marriage settlement, my mother, a woman of slight will, had permitted my husband the control of my dot. When his will, which left everything to me, was opened, only two days ago, imagine the rage of his miser mother and the hatred of his good-for-nothing, worthless brother, whose only hope of fortune came from the deceased. They turned upon me. They even hinted—God forgive them! that I—that I—had poisoned my husband." Da Messina can see the girl is wringing her hands. "But I forced them to retract that: that was too atrocious! They did not dare mention their cowardly charge to the notaries and officials of the will; but to them they accused me of having altered the last testament of my husband. True, I had written a codicil at my husband's dictation, but that was no crime: his disposition of his property was only made to give me independence from his family who, he guessed, did not love me. So they accused me of forgery. They swore to lies, and I-a girl who even now knows nothing of the world, having passed from the convent to the care of a husband who was jealous of my youth and kept me secluded, but who guarded me-I feared! For I discovered that they had even sent for the agents of Monsieur Vidocq to arrest me! I feared that the horrible fate might come upon me of Marie Cappelle Lafarge,* who, though she cries out she is innocent, is even now entombed for life in an awful prison, for the murder of her husband, though most of the world believes she is the most wronged woman upon this earth.

"What was I to do, browbeaten and accused in that way? I had no relatives of my own to protect me. When they sent for the officers to arrest me—O Monsieur! they gloatingly told me of it—the madness of panic came upon me. I was so crushed they had no fear of my escaping. I threw my personal jewels into my pocket and ran to the carriage-house in the grounds about our home, at Sèvres, to the only person I thought pitied me, our old coachman, and begged him to drive me into Paris. I had some thought of going to a lawyer, but we had hardly gone

^{*}The case of Madame Lafarge was at that time one of the most discussed causes célébre in France. Marie Cappelle, whose father was an officer in the French army and of very good blood, had been married to a man of affairs. At his death his family accused her of having poisoned her husband in order to obtain his estate. Though she was imprisoned for life for this offense, there are many grave doubts of the justice of her sentence, and at that time about one-half the people of France believed her to be innocent.—Ed.

half a mile along the road when, to my horror, we were pursued by two men, officers of the Bureau de Sûreté, in a fiacre. I begged the old coachman to drive on. He did so. We dashed over the Pont de Sèvres and flew through Auteuil and Passy, leaving far behind the hired fiacre of the officers; but just as we reached the Neuilly Avenue one of my horses threw a shoe and became so lame that he could travel no more, though, perhaps, the family coachman had become too frightened to aid me further. Anyway, by his assistance I engaged a coupé that chanced along seeking a fare.

"By this time the officers were again close to me, and chased me into Paris, where probably I would not have escaped them had it not been that the mob in the Rue de la Concorde recognized them as policemen

and dragged them out of their carriage.

"Then—then came the dead woman," and the girl goes on and gives Carlo a history of her preceding night in Paris, punctuating it with sighs and emphasizing its horrors, sometimes, in her agony, with pleading hands that seek his as if for sympathy.

To this she adds: "I had intended to speak to lawyers, but the fear of prison drove me frantic. All I thought was—to get as far from the police as possible —to avoid arrest. The dead woman's passport gave me a chance to fly to Italy. On the steamboat I became alarmed at attentions that shocked me. I had no experience of the world: I had never traveled without protection, without kindness, without love. The awful words of the nien on the boat, their brutal compliments, their hideous suggestions of passion—drove me to your side as the only man I dared trust. The gendarme frightened me. At one time I thought he was detailed for my seizure, but afterward I learned that he only wanted to degrade me like the rest, and then—perhaps, I feared him more. But why need I speak further? Oh, God, forgive you the agony you brought to me, when I thought you were a bandit who was going to murder me for the little money I had with me! But you are, I now think," she adds, a tinge of archness in the sad *timbre* of her voice, "a fugitive like myself. You feared I was an Austrian spy; that is why you treated me so harshly, but I will forgive you if you say you believe my story." Her clinging hands are clutching his.

"I do!" says the cavaliere, after a few moment's contemplation, "though it is a most extraordinary tale, one that would hardly be believed by anyone not appreciating how little you know of the world. Would

you like my advice?"

"Oh, yes, yes!"

"Then, frankly, the greatest mistake you have made, Madame la Baronne, has been your flight. You had the money side of the affair. The property was willed to you."

"But I had no champions. I had only one friend, an old banker, and he was also the friend of my husband's

mother."

"Pish! Your money would have bought you many advocates; your beauty would have gained you many supporters. A rich and almost childlike widow! You could have snapped your fingers in the faces of your accusers."

"But I thought of Madame Lafarge—I was frantic with terror at her fate. My husband's mother held it

up to me!"

"Madame Lafarge's husband died of poisoning; yours did not;" dissents her adviser. "Had you remained in Paris your chances would have been ten to your enemies' one."

"Then I will go back there!" cries the girl, an ex-

cited hope in her voice.

"That was before you fled."

"But I have not been arrested!"

"No, but you have made use of a false passport to avoid the police; you have evaded the law as if you were guilty. You have done exactly what your persecutors wished. It will very shortly be nosed out, by

the hounds of Monsieur Vidocq, that you left Paris, using the passport of the dead woman, Adele Pichoir, to escape arrest. If you return, you can be sure that your enemies will say that you fled, actuated by the fears of a criminal, but, finding that you could not get out of France, that ultimate escape was hopeless; then as a last resort you returned to attempt to brazen it out."

"Mon Dieu, you show me that I am lost!" sobs the

girl.

There is an unaffected misery in both her voice and manner that gives Da Messina greater faith in her story than he has had before. He had said that he believed her, but it was more to quiet her hysterical, nervous agitation than from any absolute conviction of its truth, though many of her actions this day, as he reconsiders them, tend to convince him that the girl's attaching herself to him has been from fright rather than from artifice.

"Then what do you advise me to do?" she asks, a

helpless dejection in her tone.

"You have no chance with the passport in your hand of escaping arrest. It states that Adele Pichoir is twenty-five—you look very much younger. You are described as a seamstress, when your fingers have no needle scars upon them, and seem much too dainty for those of a sewing girl. In addition, probably even by this time, there are sleuth-hounds on your track who have guessed the very passport you are now using."

"You think my hackman will play me false?"

"No! Because he would get himself into trouble if he did. But the record of passports issued will show one given to the woman, whose death must, by this time, be known to official Paris. Then, the books of the steamboat ticket office will disclose that, though Adele Pichoir is dead, some other woman has used her passport, leaving Paris on the Montereau boat. If they really are in pursuit of you, trust me, lacking

other clews, they will follow the woman bearing the passport of Adele Pichoir. This passport you will be compelled to exhibit in order to proceed upon your journey. Even to-morrow morning you won't be able to take the diligence at Troyes until it is inspected. In Lyons, again, it must be examined. Traveling with this passport you will be surely lost, unless Monsieur Vidocq has become imbecile from old age."

"Mon Dieu-aie pitie de moi! To be dragged back a criminal-my very flight used to prove my guilt," shudders Adrienne, then cries frantically: "Aid me, Monsieur—aid me! You have a passport that called for some one traveling with you, some pupil, or apprentice; why couldn't I escape from France by that?"

Here the gentleman gives a sudden start, and mutters: "Santa Maria, that is an idea!" As into the mind of the Cavaliere da Messina suddenly flies the thought: "By the grace of God, here's the pupil apprentice I

was to take back to Italy, in my very hands!"

"Let me think of your suggestion a moment," he adds. And after some few minutes' contemplation of the chances of the affair turning out properly, he suddenly turns to the young lady, who has been trying to discern his face by the light of the rising moon, and asks: "Do you think you can look sixteen years of age?"

"Oh, Monsieur! I—I could try," answers his cap-

tive, very eagerly.

At the naïveté of this remark, he bursts out laughing; then says in business tones: "Here's my word to you, Madame la Baronne. I was to take to Italy an apprenticed pupil, to be taught singing, music, and the arts of the stage. Her parents believed I could make her a diva, though Estelle had a very indifferent voice. Now, my proposition to you is this: You, in place of her, must become my articled apprentice."

"But that means a—a sort of servitude?" falters Adrienne, a tinge of terror in her voice, for the moonlight has now come into the carriage, and as she watches his face, instinctively she feels this man, if she gives herself into his hands, will be her master—perhaps at times a very exacting one.

"In the eyes of my aunt, la Signora Giuseppina Bianchi, who keeps a school for the training of singing and dancing girls, in Milan, it is servitude to art and also to her. But, I will doubtless be a more easy padrone. Only such is the nature of my journey that I must have implicit obedience from you, which will be for your safety as well as my own, for though there is no absolute extradition between France and Italy, the Austrian officials in Lombardy have a habit of delivering any criminal demanded by the French government. Only having made your decision, and given me the oath I shall demand of you, you must remain faithful to it. You must also take the name Estelle Gabrielle Chartres."

"And if I do not consent?"

"Then, of course, we part at Troyes, for I dare no longer assume the risk of one who will be very shortly arrested by the French police. In addition, you must make your decision very quickly."

"Why can not I have more time to consider?"

"For this reason: By a great piece of good fortune and a foolish agent de poste, your passport was not examined at Montereau, the innkeeper mistaking you for my apprentice. Therefore, the police, following the passport of Adele Pichoir, will lose it at that place. But in case you do not agree to my proposition you will be compelled to show your paper at the diligence office at Troyes, and there Monsieur Vidocq's agents will again get track of it and receive, not only the description of your dress, but also your route. Trust me, as Adele Pichoir, you will hardly reach Lyons without falling into your pursuers' hands."

"Ah! but if even I do become your apprentice, if my pursuers are at Troyes, they will recognize my dress as that worn by the woman who took her ticket at the steamboat office. If they reach there later than I do, I

will be described to them as having worn such a garment when I arrived from Montereau."

"No!" answers Da Messina, in startling logic. "Because, if you agree to my terms, you will step out of this carriage at Troyes, garbed as my apprenticed pupil, Estelle Gabrielle Chartres, and as much like a girl of sixteen as you can get."

"But, my-my clothes?"

"You have others in your trunk, I believe."

"Oh, mercy, I forgot! In that old trunk are some of the school frocks I wore at the convent."

"Bravo!" cries the cavaliere, cheerily, adding, doubtfully. "Will they fit you?"

"Yes. I am a little taller, but as slight as when I left the Sacré Cœur."

"Very well. You must make the change in this very carriage."

"Oh, mercy!"

Carlo can guess that Madame la Baronne is blushing

to her eyes.

"Do not be afraid," he laughs. "Just after daybreak I shall get out and leave you to yourself. Before this, at the posthouse, I shall put your valise inside. The first long hill we come to, I shall direct the boys to drive slower, and I shall walk for exercise. When I return, and open the door of this carriage, I shall expect to see you frocked as a schoolgirl and my very docile apprentice. But, do you give your assent? Are you willing to take sacred oath that you will sign articles of indenture to me as Estelle Gabrielle Chartres when prepared, and until that time, and after it, be entirely under my law and government?"

"I—" the girl pauses, reluctant hesitation in her voice, "I-I must do always your commands?" she

asks, nervously.

"Certainly."

"If I disobey, I—I will be punished?" her tones are trembling.

He considers a moment, and then answers: "Cer-

tainly. Government to be effective must be coercive. As a bound-girl of scarce sixteen, I shall, of course, treat you as a child. I tell you candidly that the lot of an articled apprentice in Italy is by no means luxurious. If by the exigencies of—of the business in which I am engaged "—he hesitates a little over the term—" I should be compelled to leave you under the rule of my aunt, at her hands your duties will be hard, your discipline very severe."

"I-Oh, Heaven, let me think!"

"At your pleasure," murmurs Carlo. "And, with your permission—you do not object to a cigar?"

"Oh, no; my husband smoked often."

He lights a weed and puffs it contemplatively, while Madame la Baronne de Portalis tries to bring herself to accept a condition that she dreads. Something in this man's voice tells her that in his hands she will be ruled despotically.

Suddenly, from behind them, in the quiet of the night,

is heard the sound of a galloping horse.

"They—they are pursuing me!" she gasps. "Yes, yes, Monsieur, I accept the conditions. Save me from them!"

"Do not let me take advantage of your terror," replies Da Messina, coldly. "The night is quite early. The man you dread is probably some farmer making his way home from some village wineshop. Only, after you have given me your oath I can not release you from it."

"I—I accept!" whispers the trembling girl, perchance urged to her decision by the apparent reluctance of the gentleman to coerce her to it.

"Consider! There will be no turning back after this, for my safety will depend upon your being my apprentice and treated as such, especially after we are in Italy."

"Yes; I understand. I have considered; I am ready, Mousieur."

She is seated opposite to him, but at his command—he apparently knowing that ceremony is impressive to

girls who have seen little but a convent—Adrienne obediently places her slight hands, which seem to him icy cold and tremble a little, between his strong ones. So posed, she half ejaculates, half sighs out, the oath he dictates to her, for its words make her understand that she is swearing away her liberty of action by everything she holds sacred in this world and the next.

"You understand thoroughly your position to me?" he says, impressively, when she has completed her adjuration.

"Certainly, Monsieur," she answers, her voice low in resignation and clear with mental conviction. "I am your bound-girl. As I surrendered to you my liberty, I remembered what I had read of Italian padronage. For the term of my agreement, I am little better than your serf. You instruct me in what you think is to your interest. At your word I shall be compelled to sing or dance upon the stage, and my earnings go to you. If I am rebellious, I have read that girls of my kind are well beaten in Italy. I know my fate."

"Pish! Under my hand you will not, I hope, fare so badly," remarks il cavaliere, dryly, adding, cheerily: "Who knows; some day I may make you a prima donna."

The firmness of her tone astonishes him. It indicates that, though inexperienced in the world, this widow, who is still almost a child, has an intelligence to comprehend and a courage to meet her cruel situation. This will, in some respects, make his coercion of her easier, in others much more difficult; so he continues, commandingly: "From this moment, remember that you are no more Madame la Baronne de Portalis. You are now my bound-girl, Estelle Gabrielle Chartres. Repeat your new name after me, so that you will know it!"

This she does several times, in clear, cold, decided tones, answering when he calls her "Estelle" and re-

plying when he addresses her as "Mademoiselle Chartres."

But, this lesson being over, Adrienne remarks, a pleading in her tone: "Now, surely, you may trust me enough to release me entirely! Believe me, Monsieur, I will be very obedient."

"Oh, in the darkness I forgot! Pardon me," Carlo mutters, and, reaching down, unties the scarf from his apprentice's pretty feet. These, he now perceives, are very high instepped and her slight ankles are exquisitely rounded.

A moment after, having apparently, made up his mind to a distinct line of action, her padrone, for as such Adrienne now regards him, says suddenly: "Estelle, you must sleep now, in order to be strong for your morning's ordeal."

She starts at her new name, but answers: "Yes, I— I am very tired. All last night, in the little room at Mère Grenouile's, I awoke at every passing sound, fearing it was the officers making demand for me."

Even while she is speaking, with an air of authority, the gentleman has deftly arranged one seat of the vehicle so that his charge can recline, and made a pillow of a rug that the postchaise contains. Obeying his directions, she places her head upon it. He throws a robe over her, and whispers: "Think no more for yourself. This journey is now my affair. I will take care that it is for you a safe one."

His words seem to lift a load off this girl, who, until these last few days, has scarce attempted to guide herself. With a little sigh, half of helplessness, half of rest, she closes her eyes, and after a few minutes her guardian is pleased to see that insensibility has come to his charge.

"Basta!" he communes with himself. "She'll be an awful responsibility, upon this journey." Then he turns eyes of sympathy upon the sleeping girl, and mutters: "Poor devil-her terror makes me pretty certain her story is true. But, all the same, Madame la Baronne will have to be taught absolute obedience, for on it will depend not only her safety, but my safety, and in this crisis of my country I will give Italy every chance."

CHAPTER V.

THE METAMORPHOSIS OF MADAME LA BARONNE.

Some hours after this, as daylight is coming into the coach windows, Adrienne finds herself awakened firmly, yet considerately. The cavaliere is whispering to her, "We are nearing the posthouse, where I must have your

trunk put into the carriage."

"I—I am so—so very sleepy," mutters his charge, her half-closed eyes peering about the coach in a dazed way. For a moment she thinks the whole affair a dream, but his hand is upon her shoulder, and his voice says, sharply: "Estelle, arouse yourself at once! This is the only chance for you to make your change of dress."

Her new name smites her with the truth.

"Yes, Monsieur, I— Oh, Heaven!" she murmurs, frantically. "It is true; I remember—I am a fugitive. I must do this to escape?" As she speaks, her tone grows more resolute.

"Yes. To prevent any one noticing you, I will per-

sonally place the trunk in the coach."

Two minutes after they are halted, changing horses at the posthouse.

"Would you care for a glass of wine? I'll try and

get one," he suggests.

"No, but I'd like a drink of water," she answers eagerly.

This he brings to her with his own hand.

"Now for your trunk," he whispers, and a little admiration, likewise a little awe, flies into the young widow's eyes as Carlo da Messina shows an athlete's

strength handling the trunk with about the ease ordinary men would a carpet-bag. She can not help contrasting him with her late senile husband.

Putting this into the interior of the vehicle, his new *protégée* having no key for it, her mentor quickly forces the lock, and displays before her its contents, at which she bursts out sobbing:

"God pity me! These are the relics of my girlhood; the trinkets I had in the convent when I was happy.

Mon Dieu, what a fate has come upon me!"

"To escape that fate!" Carlo commands, sternly. "For your safety, for my safety, Estelle, you must con-

quer your emotions and do my bidding."

"Ah, yes!—my—my new name," she whispers. Then as they drive along she murmurs to him: "Yes, I understand. I am to try and look sixteen, and be very obedient. I am your bound-girl, Monsieur"—this last with an attempted archness in her voice.

"Yes. The postboys inform me that a good long hill is a mile or so ahead. By that time it will be light enough for you to make your schoolgirl toilet. There I shall get out and walk. The postilions will doubtless drive slowly up the ascent. I will make them linger as long as possible, to give you ample opportunity, though be as quick as you can."

"Yes, yes; I comprehend," and as she speaks Adrienne goes to looking over and selecting the articles for

her purpose.

Ten minutes later, drawing down the blinds on the windows, Carlo steps out of the carriage, and, lifting his hat, cries: "Estelle, I shall take a little exercise!"

They are approaching the beautiful vine country, through whose hills the Seine, a little river now, dashes brightly on. The sunrise of the bright, crisp winter morning makes even the leafless picture a pleasant one; the smoke from the chimneys of a neighboring hamlet seems to give it life and movement. Dividing his time between the view and the puffs of a well-flavored cigar, il Cavaliere da Messina contrives to

spend a passable half-hour strolling, a little distance behind the chaise, up the long hill, as the postboys walk their horses. The sun is now brilliant in the heavens.

He steps up to the carriage that has nearly reached the summit, and, rapping lightly upon the panel of the door, asks, "Are you ready, Estelle?"

"Oh, Monsieur, no! I-I have on but one shoe-be-

sides, my-my hair!"

"Very well; take five minutes more!" he laughs, and finishes his cigar as he chats with the postilions, who walk their horses to the apex of the rise.

"Are you ready now, Estelle?"

"Yes, Monsieur, quite ready!" A light hand lets

the blinds of the carriage windows fly up.

Opening the door, Carlo da Messina pauses, astounded. Fine feathers make fine birds, but here is one who, though not in fine feathers, is a very fine bird, for Adrienne only has needed a chance to show her youthful, vivacious face, which as yet has not been matured by passion, to make a very beautiful picture, and her toilet gives to the young widow a very juvenile appearance. This is emphasized by the shyness of her eyes and the embarrassment of her manner, though Da Messina can not help noticing the grace of her bearing and the resolution in her bright face. She is costumed à la schoolgirl in a frock she probably had worn when she was only sixteen, for its skirt of soft gray cloth doesn't reach the ground by some few inches. Peeping out from it, after the fashion of the day, are two little feet in high-heeled shoes, draped to the delicate ankles by profusely frilled and ruffled trousers of snowiest linen. Upon her blushing head is a white hat of leghorn straw, trimmed by a single white ribbon. From beneath this, in luxurious bands, her brown hair gleams in the sun as it is gathered about her shapely head and braided into one long, luxuriant queue that dangles even below her waist, where it is ended and adorned by a piquant bow of white ribbon.

"Santa Maria!" ejaculates the gentleman, a curious gleam in his dark eyes, as he steps in beside her.

"You—you like my frock?" whispers the lady.

"Yes; only I am afraid that you will attract too much attention from gentlemen."

" Is that always a fault?"

"No; but in your case it would be a misfortune. The less remark we cause, the easier will be our journey. And now you will excuse me." Carlo's face grows very red, for a moment his voice seems to hesitate. Then he goes stoutly on: "I have to speak to you about money. Anything more than a few francs in the pocket of a singing-girl would be more than suspicious. I must ask you to let me take charge of your money. Believe me, I shall account to you for every sou of this when our compact is over."

For one instant Adrienne's face grows pale with suspicion. Then, the common-sense of his suggestion striking her, without a word she produces from the discarded brown dress the packet of billets de banque she has sewn inside of it, and also tenders him her purse.

At sight of this he sneers: "Cospetto, a portemonnaie, with a coronet on it! Oh, you would have made a most plausible sewing-girl! This pocketbook must go into the fire; this brown dress of the dead woman'severything that tends to link you to your former life."
"My schoolgirl trinkets? This picture of my dead

mother!" half shrieks the girl.

"No; I—I will make a sealed packet of them, and leave them with a banker in Troyes," interjects her governor. "I can not ask you to sacrifice so much. Then you can send for them at a later and, perhaps, happier dav."

"Oh, thank you-thank you!" whispers Adrienne,

her eves growing bright with gratitude.

"Your clothes in your trunk are marked?" he suggests.

"By my maiden initials, A. R., which will not sug-

gest to prying eyes the name of De Portalis," answers Adrienne.

"But even these must, at the first opportunity, be changed to the initials of Estelle Gabrielle Chartres," suggests her mentor. "Here are a few francs and some pennies to put in your pocket. These are even more than a girl in your position ought to carry. Believe me, this money business is the hardest part of my duty to you—my duty to myself—for your fate and mine are now linked very closely together; remember that, Estelle!"

"Yes, yes; I understand," falters the young lady, biting her lip and feeling that now she is indeed dependent upon her ruler.

A moment later she suggests diffidently, as if fearing refusal: "We are at another small hill. I have been in the carriage so long, a little exercise would be pleasant to me; can I get out and walk?"

"Why, certainly. The winter air is brisk. Permit me," and Carlo shawls her carefully. As he does so, he notes that the only contradictions to extreme youth in his pupil are the exquisite contours of her figure, whose rounded outlines, both of bust and limbs, indicate budding womanhood. Fortunately, these are rendered indistinct by a childish corsage, whose loose drapery partially conceals her graces.

"We'll take a stroll together." He steps out and courteously, even ceremoniously, assists her from the vehicle.

As he stands before her in the sunlight, she furtively glances up at his face, studying the countenance of this man in whose hands fate has placed her. A look of confidence comes into her eyes. Whatever else he may be, her padrone is certainly a gentleman. The sunlight playing about his handsome face shows very clearly the refinement of his determined features, the tenderness of his eyes being contradicted by lips that are firm, though passionate. Altogether, il Cavaliere Carlo da Messina, with his erect, graceful figure, dark, curly

hair, and long, drooping mustache, makes an impressive picture, his gestures at times giving a romantic, perhaps even a theatrical, vivacity to his appearance.

But as she gazes Adrienne catches a glint in his eyes that makes her stammer, a slight tremor on her delicate

lips: "You-you are displeased with me?"

" I am!"

"Oh, what have I done?"

"You are careless!"

The coach is already well in advance of them on its way up the hill. As they stroll after it, he continues: "A wedding-ring on your finger is not very appropriate for a schoolgirl of sixteen!"

"Oh—I—I forgot!" stammers his protégée.

"Take it from your finger at once!"

Carlos's tone is more severe than he intends it to be, for, as he glances at the beautiful widow, who stands in almost childish loveliness, now so completely in his power, the first curious gleam of a latent jealousy for the man who had once called this graceful creature "wife" comes into his heart.

Therefore his eyes are stern also as he remarks:

"You certainly must see, Estelle, that every relic of your former life must be put away from you."

"Yes, of course; I—I understand," mutters his apprentice, as she removes the ring from her finger.

"Give it to me!"

"But-oh, please-it is-"

"Yes, I understand precisely what it is."

"But you will not destroy it?"

"No, I will place it with the other articles you cherish, and deposit all under seal, as I before told you, with the banker at Troyes. Pardon me if I seem harsh, but we are both compelled to extreme circumspection." Then, as if wishing to change the course of the girl's thoughts, he speaks more lightly: "By the bye, as I am your music teacher, tell me what you know about the art. Sing for me the diatonic scale, ascending and de-

scending. Of course you learned that much at the convent?"

"Oh, yes!" And Adrienne, in trembling voice and with some hesitation, runs through the exercise for him.

"Now the chromatic, ascending, descending." And his pupil doing as she is bid, he remarks: "It would not be bad if you were not so agitated. You, I can see, have a correct ear, which is of vital importance. A voice may be improved, even manufactured; but without an ear, music is an impossibility. You play?"

"Oh, yes; I was taught at the convent both the piano

and the harp."

"Then probably you perform on these instruments very indifferently," remarks the artist, with the usual contempt of the professional for the amateur. "But at the first opportunity I will try you. You dance, of course?" He glances at her slight, graceful figure, and now perceives that she is of the medium height; but her short skirts apparently diminish her stature.

"Oh, yes, a—a little, Monsieur. I was instructed at Sacré Cœur; but I only went to one or two balls. You—

you see, my husband was very jealous of me!"

"I hope you didn't give him cause," returns the ca-

valiere, stifling a grin.

"Oh, Monsieur!" the startled tone and blushes of his charge answer him; but he looks at her innocent face, and, noting that some day it will be a passionate one, goes on, in a tone that makes her hang her head: "Now, listen to me! I shall allow no affairs with gentlemen, Estelle. They will disturb your studies; they will destroy your stage work. Situated as you now are, your very bread and butter compels you to make a histrionic success. Mark me, the first suspicion of a flirtation, I call you to account. You understand me!"

"Yes, sir," she answers, simply, looking him in the

face, though there is a strange shyness in her tone.

"Now," he goes on, briskly; "as soon as possible I shall hear you declaim and sing, and see you dance, and then determine what line of dramatic work will be the

best for you. You speak German, I know, but not Italian?"

"No; I have read it a little. I would like to learn the language of romance and passion." The girl's eyes light

up as they look upon her handsome preceptor.

"For the operatic stage it is essential that you do. I will begin to instruct you in it at once." With this, he gives her a short lecture on the elements of his language, but finishes abruptly, saying: "The postboys are waiting for us. We must hurry to Troyes. There I must have at least an hour before the diligence from Paris arrives." So he puts her in the carriage, and, encouraging their postilions by the promise of gratuity, they dash rapidly along over the well-kept posting road.

They have scarce seated themselves, when he suggests: "You must know something of your new self, Estelle Gabrielle Chartres," and gives his apprentice a short account of the girl whose place she has taken, adding: "Now, collect the trinkets, valuables, and letters you wish me to deposit for you at Troyes. I believe I know the right man, an old local banker,

Darton, on the Rue de la Cité."

"Oh, thank you!" murmurs Adrienne, in grateful tones, doing as she is bid, though tears come into her eyes as she bends over her open trunk and takes adieu of the souvenirs of a past that seems now so absolutely cut off from her.

A moment later, Carlo makes a packet of the articles she has selected in some stout wrapping paper that the girl, fortunately, finds in her trunk. "Quick!" he says, in rapid voice. "The brown dress, and all other belongings of Adele Pichoir. You must also sweep your trunk clear of any convent articles that may link you to Madame la Baronne de Portalis."

And she surrendering these to him, he commands: "Make another search! Be very sure you leave no trace behind you. I shall have a big fire in my room at the hotel in Troyes, and these will all disappear in

smoke. The packet I shall carefully seal and deposit for vou."

"No, there is nothing else; you have everything that

—that links me to my old life," she sighs.

"Now I have all, except the passport of Adele Pichoir—that is very important. Please give it to me at once," he remarks, briskly.
"The—the passport?" she stammers.

"Yes: I must use it to dupe the officers who are seek-

ing you."

But here she horrifies him by faltering: "The passport is gone. While dressing I tore up the paper of Adele Pichoir, and threw the little bits out of the carriage window. They are scattered along the road."

"Maladetto!" he gasps. "All last night I plotted that that passport should be shown from one town to another leading the hounds of Monsieur Vidocq upon the track of Adele Pichoir to Belgium, thereby giving you free journey to the south with me."

"You could have done that?" she ejaculates in

amazed unbelief.

"Certainly! The Society of Young Italy has members in every town in France!" he says, impressively. "And now my plans for you are naught!" There is a sadness in his voice that touches the girl.

"Oh, forgive me!" she pleads. "Last night, while

I slept, you were thinking for my safety?"

"Yes, a little. But, Dio mio, your action has placed new difficulties before us." He is speaking with Latin explosiveness. "From now on, in word and deed, you must be absolutely my bound-girl, Estelle Gabrielle Chartres. Dash from your head that you were once Madame la Baronne de Portalis. From this moment you must assume the actions of your station. You must address me as 'Mio padrone;' you must courtesy when I speak to you; you must come when I call 'Estelle!'"

"Yes, sir, I—I understand."

"Now, let me teach you who thy padrone is. You must know me as 'il Cavaliere Carlo Tomasso da Messina,' at one time teacher of the voice at the Conservatory di Santa Maria, Naples, and also, occasionally, to favorite pupils in the school of my aunt, Signora Bianchi, at Milan, but perhaps more generally known to the world upon the stage of the opera at La Scala and La Fenice as 'Pergolese.'"

"What!" screams the girl. "Carlo Pergolese, the tenor about whom all Italy raves! Oh, Monsieur, I

have read of your triumphs!"

"Thank you, little one," returns the artist, smiling suavely at the compliment not only of Adrienne's lips, but of her eyes, for these are turned upon him in a kind

of admiring wonder.

"But we have got dust upon that pretty jupe and those white trousers," he laughs, and with the easy familiarity of authority he stands his pupil on her feet and brushes the dirt from her frock with his handkerchief, as she blushingly turns her eyes from his. "And now sit up on the seat and look most demurely juvenile, for we are very close to Troyes, where you are going to be the most retiring, modest little chick in France."

"You-you think I will look young enough?" she

asks, anxiously.

"Yes—hardly over fifteen," says her mentor cheerily.
"You understand thoroughly that for your safety you will be treated like a little girl."

"Yes, yes, Monsieur; I understand!" and her face grows haughty, then tears fly into the bright eyes of

Madaine la Baronne.

So they dash through the streets of the quaint and ancient town, once the capital of Champagne, and draw up in the courtyard of the old-fashioned Hotel de la Croix d'Or.

Here Carlo, springing from the carriage, calls: "Es-

telle, petite, step out!"

And she, faltering, "Yes, mio padrone," prepares to descend from the vehicle. Even as she places her little hand upon his proffered arm she seems to shrink from the ordeal of a new childhood.

The provincial courtyard is full of lounging postboys, tourists, travelers, and a few ladies, who are about taking the diligence going north. The one coming from Paris, Da Messina is delighted to learn, will probably not arrive for a couple of hours.

"It has been delayed by the revolution," he is told by the bustling *mâtre d'hôtel*, who comes out in person to welcome the new arrivals, for everyone here seems to be aware of the fact that Louis Philippe has been over-

thrown and fled.

But in the midst of his speech the landlord, suddenly turning his eyes to the carriage, remarks: "Monsieur, what a pretty—I—I mean haughty—child you have under your—your charge!" The last of this is an agitated stammer, for the "pretty child" has given him a very savage look.

"Yes, my apprentice, whom I am taking to Italy to educate for the operatic stage," remarks the cavaliere carelessly; then says hastily, for he is anxious to get out

of the crowd, "Descend at once, Estelle!"

With this, Madame la Baronne puts her pretty foot on the step of the carriage and, feeling strangely embarrassed in the short skirts of childhood, descends into

the courtyard.

Excessive modesty usually attracts attention. The gaze of the loungers at the hotel entrance naturally rests upon the charming yet shrinking figure. Under their curious glances Adrienne for one moment is strangely haughty; then, thinking of her short skirts, is very blushing, shy, and bashful, even as a young girl should be. She only wants to get out of the public eye, her agitation being increased by the sight of a man who has just ridden in on horseback, bringing some further news from Paris, he says. But some woman's instinct makes her suspicious of the fellow.

In this wish she is very shortly accommodated. Without consulting her, Da Messina immediately leads his *protégée* into the parlor, and as soon as arrangements are made conducts her to a little chamber. Glancing in,

he remarks: "This is at your service. Make yourself as comfortable as possible. By my order, there is a fire, and your trunk is ready for you. The diligence from Paris has been delayed, and will not be here for some time. You had better sleep, or would you first prefer a cup of coffee? I would send up your breakfast, but I wish you to take that meal with me in the dining salon. It is prudent for us to be seen together and you recognized as under my direction."

"I thank you for your consideration," answers Adrienne. "No need of the coffee; I am quite tired."

"Then au revoir. I go to deposit your valuables."

"Thank you."

She turns to enter the room, but he calls her back, and says sharply: "You forget!"

"Forget what?"

"The courtesy it is necessary for you to make when you leave your padrone," he says sharply. "Make me a low one, so that you will remember the next time."

For one second Madame la Baronne's eyes flash, and a red spot comes upon either cheek, which before this had been quite pale. Then, draping her skirts in schoolgirl fashion with either hand, she sweeps down till her dainty knee touches the floor, and, rising, says: "Is that precise enough, mio padrone?" the words seeming to linger in her throat, as she enters the bedroom and closes the door behind her.

With every nerve in her body bounding in rebellion, she stamps her little feet till the well-starched frills on her white trousers rustle, and mutters to herself: "Not even a kind glance! Dressed as a child; treated as if I were the veriest infant! I'll—I'll—"

But whatever resolve is in her pretty head, it never escapes, for just here she starts and opens her ears, and after a few moments her face becomes suddenly pale. Then listening again, her eyes grow agonized.

Two men pass through the lobby just outside her room. She can hear them step into the next apartment. This is *en suite* with her chamber, connected by a door,

which is apparently secured and bolted, as she notices some one is trying the lock.

Then a cautious voice remarks: "Innkeeper, we have

no neighbors here?"

"No, only a girl, who amounts to nothing—going to Italy to be taught to sing and dance upon the stage, I believe; a mere child, who has been so ruled that she trembles at every one's glance, and most of all at her padrone's, who, I can see, has a very strict hand with her." In this reply she recognizes the voice of the

aubergiste.

"Very well, then, I will come to business. I did not dare question you in the publicity of your office," says the other. "I am an employee of Monsieur Vidocq's private inquiry office, on the Rue Vivienne. I want to know if you have seen in the last few hours a woman giving the name or using the passport of Adele Pichair?"

At this there is a little moaning gasp from Adrienne under her breath.

"No. No such woman is registered here," replies the landlord.

"In case she should be, you must notify me at once. This woman Adele Pichoir was killed two nights ago."

"Diable!' Then you should seek her in the other

world!" grins the innkeeper.

"Mille tonnerres!" growls the other. "Don't play with an officer of justice. This passport of Adele Pichoir was used by a woman taking the boat to Montereau. It is the woman using the false passport whom we are seeking. One of us was dispatched last evening to Montereau, but it struck Monsieur Vidocq that the culprit might journey by private conveyance from that town to this place, as the passport is issued to Lyons and Marseilles; so I have come hurriedly on to discover if she is in Troyes. The fugitive will look much younger than the age mentioned on the passport, twenty-five. She will also be aristocratic, though her papers will state she is a seamstress. I will now go to the De la Fontaine, and also inspect all other inns of the town. But remember, there is a reward of ten thousand francs for the woman I seek, and a little of it may find its way into your pocket, Monsieur Innkeeper, if you help me."

"Sacré bleu! Then I will keep a sharp eye for Adele—what was her name?"

"Adele Pichoir," repeats the officer. "You can reserve this room for me; I will make it my headquarters while I am in your town. Twenty-four hours will probably settle whether the woman comes here or not."

"Ten thousand francs!" laughs the landlord. "We will go and have a glass of wine together, in hope of

getting some of it."

And the two leave the room, their hurried footsteps beating a tattoo on Adrienne's heart, as she mutters: "Oh, I am indeed in the toils! I have no hope outside of my padrone—that's what he is; that's what he must be! Oh, why is he so stern with me? If he would be but a little kinder to me, I would——"

But a blush checks the sentence, as this youthful widow sinks into a chair, wringing her hands help-lessly, the terror of the pursued and the hunted-down being upon her.

BOOK II.

A PATRIOT CONSPIRATOR.

CHAPTER VI.

THE AUSTRIAN CAPTAIN.

Consequently, when, about an hour after this, Carlo da Messina, who has received good news from Italy by a compatriot in the town, raps upon the door of his *protégée's* room, and calls quite cheerily, "Estelle, in half an hour, breakfast!" it is immediately opened by a very wild-eyed young lady, who puts her finger upon her pale lips, and whispers: "For the love of God, take me where I can speak to you and not be overheard!"

Her appearance indicates to her guardian that something extraordinary has happened. He says calmly but loudly for the benefit of any neighboring ears, "Very well, since you are prepared, Estelle, we will take a little walk before breakfast." As they pass down the stairs together, Carlo chats to Adrienne upon the ordinary business of their journey, stating that, by a gentleman and his wife having postponed their trip to Lyons, he has been enabled to book two seats in the diligence for Chalons, adding: "There we will take steamboat down the Saone, and pass a quiet Sunday in commercial Lyons, where you can have a day's rest, petite."

While he is speaking, they have stepped out of the courtyard of the hotel. Wandering through the narrow streets of the old town, they shortly find themselves upon some open fields, which have since been made into

the Boulevard Gambetta.

Here, looking carefully around and observing only

some distant laborers and gardeners, her mentor says to her: "Now tell me your story, child."

And she affrightedly describes what she had over-

heard in the adjoining room.

At her story his face grows serious. "You see," he whispers, "what a poor chance you would have had bearing the passport of Adele Pichoir. Now, however, I think I can make everything very safe for you. Listen to my directions. In case this *mouchard*, learning that we have come from Montereau, should attempt to question you—"

"What shall I say to him?" asks Adrienne, in eager

agitation.

"Only this: that you are not permitted by your padrone to speak to gentlemen. That will settle the matter. Diable! If you should attempt explanation to the spy, your frightened manner would perhaps betray you." He gazes a little more tenderly at Madame la Baronne, who, under his inspection, is blushing delightfully.

Then he continues: "I have the receipt for your valuables from the banker in the Rue de la Cité. This I shall indorse over to you when you are safe in Italy. As we return to the hotel, in excuse for our walk, we will

make a purchase."

In the streets of the town they soon find a bookstore. Here they buy an Italian grammar. As they come out, he taps the volume lightly, and remarks: "Estelle, in the diligence this will be useful. When you feel embarrassed, hide your face in the book. Besides, as you have to study Italian, your time will not be thrown away."

So they stroll back to the hotel, where, appetite having come with her walk to his bashful éleve, Carlo leads his beautiful charge into the dining-room. Here, seated vis-à-vis with her guardian at a little table, Mademoiselle Estelle Gabrielle Chartres goes through her breakfast so prettily that many masculine eyes are attracted to this blushing girl, who seems just on the border-line of childhood and womanhood.

Once or twice during the progress of the repast she seems surprised, as she is treated quite *en fillette*, and is not consulted as to what dishes she would like, though a very good but plain meal has been selected for her.

She fights down a move at this, for she has sense enough to perceive that the younger she is considered the less chance of suspicion coming upon her. Then, imagining she sees the pursuing officer de sûreté looking into the dining-room, she attempts to play her rôle; but doing this a little boisterously, her guardian suddenly whispers to her: "Be careful! You are attracting the attention of several gentlemen in the dining-room."

"Pish! I am only a child," she whispers, rather

mutinously.

"But not too young a child to be interesting. That tall man over there——"

"Oh! The one in the Austrian uniform! He is

very handsome."

"Diavolo! You have been using your eyes, eh? He is booked in the diligence coupé with us to Chalons."

"Ah, then, remembering your commands, I shall read my Italian grammar!" remarks Estelle, demurely, and finishes her breakfast.

Noting this, her padrone says: "The coach will soon be at the door." And, leading her to the waiting-room, he steps out to arrange about their luggage.

A moment after, Madame la Baronne starts and trembles. The mouchard, the dreaded mouchard, is

speaking to her.

In this she is right, for learning from the proprietor of the hotel, who is anxious to assist him, that the pretty girl in the parlor has this morning arrived from Montereau, with her padrone, the officer of the Bureau de Sûreté has stepped up to her. He is quite a dapper fellow, but is dressed and disguised as a middle-class shopkeeper. In the easy unrefinement a man of the people would use to a child, he addresses the fugitive: "Ma petite, you came from Montereau last night, didn't you, and arrived in Troyes this morning?"

"You—you will pardon me, Monsieur," falters Adrienne, whose very agitation seems to declare her extreme youth, as she rises. "My—my padrone does not permit me to converse with gentlemen."

"Oho!" chuckles the police spy. "Parbleu, he is right, with that pretty face of yours! But you can surely tell me a few words about your journey?"

But here he is checked by Adrienne's stammering affrightedly: "Monsieur, I beg you, my—my master is coming. He—he will see us! I—I shall be punished. I—"

"Diable! Your padrone must be a monster!" jeers the man; but turns away, thinking: "This poor little bashful fool could not tell me anything. Perhaps this Italian singing master, who apparently bullies her, may give me more information." So, il cavaliere coming up, he says to him: "May I beg a word with you, illustrious Signore? I believe I have observed you on the boulevards of Paris."

"Possibly — with Monsieur Cremieux, who is my bosom friend," returns Carlo. "What can I do for you?"

This mention of the greaty deputy of the successful revolution makes the police spy very affable to the Italian, as they stroll to the *café* together, where Carlo listens to his questions about a woman journeying on the Montereau boat, and receives quite an accurate description of the brown dress that an hour ago he had cremated over a blazing fire in his chamber in this hotel.

"Yes, I believe I did see someone like the person you mention on the Montereau boat," replies Da Messina, affably. "I believe, after landing, I saw her no more. But she could have hardly come this way, because only one postchaise was obtainable at the *Cheval Blanc*, and that brought me and my apprentice. Is there anything else?"

"No—only if Monsieur would mention me to Monsieur Cremieux as an industrious officer, it would do

me no harm. He will probably be one of the provisional government," suggests the man.

"When I return to Paris, call upon me," replies the cavaliere. "But now you will excuse me. The dili-

gence is driving up."

The next minute Adrienne utters a sigh of relief as she is very carefully cloaked by her guardian and led from the officer, whose glances she fears, to be seated in the *coupé*, the most pleasant portion of the vehicle, its glass doors and front permitting a complete view of the country.

Into this also steps the handsome Austrian officer, who announces in his affable Viennese way that he is *en route* to resume his duties in Milan. "So I am happy to say we will journey together as far as Chalons," he says, and presents his card to Da Messina, who, reading on it "Captain Franz Paulus Radetzky, Regiment Maria Theresa," bows and presents his.

Glancing at it, the Austrian's face lights up. He cries: "Oho! I am honored. Carlo Pergolese. I thought I recognized your face, Signore; but, of course, as Don Giovanni, on the stage of La Scala, your appearance was somewhat different from what it is at present." Then, in South German frankness, he laughs: "And you, who play the Lothario to the very life, are now the protector of innocence!"

His glance at Adrienne suggests an introduction, but her padrone simply remarks: "My apprentice, who is to be educated for the stage in Italy." Then turning to his charge, Da Messina suggests: "Now, Estelle, you will have a chance to study Italian," adding a few remarks upon the irregular verbs in that language.

For a moment his *protégée* looks mutinous. She would much sooner watch the diligence, with its five clumsy horses in their old-fashioned rope harness, and listen to the excited crowd standing about it. A moment later she inwardly thanks her guardian that he has given her opportunity to conceal the pallid agitation of her face by poring over the volume.

The interieur and rotunde of the conveyance are filled with passengers from Paris, while, clambering to its top behind the cocher, are three or four winegrowers, en route to Dijon. These are discussing in loud voice the turbulent news that has just come from the capital.

"Tonnerre de Dieu!" cries one. "They have sacked

the Tuileries and broken all its fine Sèvres."

"Yes, and the citizen-king has fled under the name of William Smith, Englishman!" guffaws another.

But an old Royalist, standing by, mutters: "Misericorde! France will repent this! Some day, perchance,

there will be another guillotine."

This seems to check the chattering even of the Republicans, for the horror of the Revolution of 1848 was the recollection of the Revolution of 1793. The moment "Vive la Republique!" was shouted, the guillotine seemed to rise up and cast its shadow over every one.

As if to change discussion from local subjects, someone cries out: "This will be great news for Italy! Lombardy and Venice will soon be on fire!"

"Bah!" says another. "Radetzky will settle the

Italians."

"By the bye," remarks Da Messina, studying the young officer, "your card bears the name of the Austrian field marshal?"

"Yes, I have the honor to be a nephew of the Governor of Lombardy," replies his *vis-à-vis*. "I have just been recalled to join his staff."

"Ah, yes! I understand the Milan garrison is being

re-enforced," replies the tenor.

"Of that I have no knowledge," says the other, looking rather curiously at his interrogator; then, as if anxious to change the topic, tapping a Paris journal in his hand, he observes: "I see the last edition of the Figaro finds room for one social, every-day piece of news—that of a great crime."

" Indeed!"

"Yes. A certain Adrienne la Baronne de Portalis,

having been discovered forging the last will and testament of her husband, has taken sudden flight. It is now rumored that she even put arsenic in the old gentleman's tea."

"Basta, another Madame Lafarge!" ejaculates the cavaliere, moving so as to shield his charge as much

as possible from observation.

"Diable! The Figaro states that Monsieur Vidocq is after the poor devil—only nineteen— and very beautiful," remarks the young officer. "I will read you the article."

"I should like to hear it very much," replies Da Messina, though he says sharply to his protégée: "Estelle, you had better attend to your lesson. Such crimes are

not good for the ears of children."

And Madame la Baronne, burying her head in the book, appears to study Italian diligently, though despite herself her lips tremble, her face grows agonized, and her whole frame quivers as she hears read a very spicy article about her own pretty self, her eccentricities, wickedness, and flight.

"She also had three or four lovers, I see!" laughs

the young man.

And the black type in which the Italian irregular verbs are printed seems to grow red to the eyes of the fugitive. But to the Austrian officer, as he glances admiringly toward her, she only seems a most delightful child, perchance a little overgrown and somewhat ashamed at hearing the record of a very wicked Parisian aristocrate. Fortunately, two very beautiful feet and attractive ankles distract his attention from the blushing face, which is buried modestly in her task.

By this time the diligence is well out of the old town. So, fighting to force her danger out of her mind, the fugitive blesses her padrone's Italian grammar, and, growing calmer, strives to appear interested in the book, not one word of which is yet intelligible to her swim-

ming eyes.

Over a very good road they climb to the upper waters

of the Seine, its vine-clad hills growing higher and higher, and soon after reach, for dinner, pretty Chatillon. Here, the diligence rushing into the narrow courtyard, the stable door opens on one side for the horses, and the hotel door on the other for the passengers.

At this meal Da Messina, who, for some unknown reason, is now apparently anxious to get on good terms with the young Austrian, the two having spent most of the journey in a conversation devoted to the opera and music, of which the professional finds his compagnon de voyage an enthusiastic admirer, feels himself practically compelled to introduce him to his charge, though he does so as if she were but a child.

"Captain Radetzky," he says, "this is my little apprentice, Estelle. We hope to make the child a great

artist in Italy some day."

Taking the hint, the officer also treats Madame la Baronne as a child. He says, playfully: "If your voice is as beautiful as your face, you will undoubtedly be-

come the rage."

At this compliment, not remarkable for its delicacy, Estelle blushes, but, reflecting that a young man of his high rank, the nephew of the famous Austrian general, probably thinks he is more than polite to a mere apprentice of the stage, she answers him quite modestly: "I thank you, Monsieur. Under Signore Pergolese I should be a dunce not to succeed."

But the contrast to the ceremonious way in which she had in her former life been addressed by gentlemen seems to take the appetite away from Mademoiselle Estelle Gabrielle Chartres, for as such Madame la Baronne is beginning to regard herself. She begins to see that the world will have slight consideration for the bound-girl of an Italian padrone.

In another half an hour they are *en route* again, and, the night, descending, she finds herself very carefully wrapped up from the cold in rugs, and made as comfortable as it is possible to be in a jolting old diligence.

All this evening they rumble on. At change of horses

the two gentlemen get out and smoke their cigars together, Estelle sleepily noting that both have eschewed politics, on which the Austrian and the Italian would be sure to disagree, and have become quite friendly over little anecdotes of Milan life, Da Messina telling his companion several stories of "behind the scenes" that, apparently, please Captain Radetzky very well, for he cries out: "We must meet in Milan, my friend. There you must introduce me to the beautiful prima donna, and I'll give la diva a supper. I believe it is rumored that Sophie Olinska is more épris with the handsomest tenor in Italy than with any noble of the court or officer of the army."

"Sapristi!" laughs the other. "Don't believe everything you hear. I'll introduce you to la belle Sophie, and you shall see that I am not the handsomest tenor

in Italy."

They are lighting their cigars near the door of the coupé. Catching their speeches, Estelle suddenly wonders as to the life of the man who now holds her so firmly in his grasp. "Is he a Don Giovanni off the stage as well as on?" He has this day at times been very stern to her, at times very kind. She remembers his touch as he lifted her out of the diligence to take a little stroll at the last posthouse, scarce an hour ago; how he had run many errands for her all this day to increase her comfort. She sighs to herself: "These are but proofs of the interest of a padrone in his bound-girl, one who must dance and sing and show her graces upon the stage to put money in his purse." Then, some curious emotion rising in her, she startles herself by muttering: "Some day shall I be a fêted prima donna, and sing with him like this—this Olinska, whose name they link with his?"

But a man outside calls: "Cocher, have you brought a Paris Figaro?" And this poor fugitive, who is proclaimed a criminal in the very newspapers, cowers and shrinks and hides her head.

A moment later, the horses having been put in for

the next post, the two men, tossing away their cigars, re-enter the coupé. A stable-boy is passing with a lighted torch.

"Ach Gott!" murmurs the Austrian. "There are tear stains upon the cheeks of your little Gretchen."

"Yes, the poor child only left her home two days ago," says Da Messina quietly, and he wraps the robes quite tenderly about the reclining figure.

Apparently this soothes her. Tired nature brings relief to this hunted one, who, flying from prison, has become the bound-girl of this man. She gives a little sigh, and in forgetfulness is happy. Even the condemned sleep the night before execution.

CHAPTER VII.

THE VOICE IN THE NIGHT.

Opening her eyes the next morning to her padrone's voice, Estelle discovers that during the night they have passed Dijon, for the bright sun is shining into the diligence, and they are rolling rapidly between stonefenced vineyards toward Chalons sur Saone, where a little steamboat is waiting to carry them down the waters of that river to commercial Lyons.

Her awakening is greeted by both gentlemen with a

bright "Good morning!"

To this her padrone adds in kindly tone: "Petite, I hope you are refreshed," announcing, as if to cheer her, "A good bed in Lyons this evening!" For two nights' lumbering over French roads, united with the anxietics of a fugitive, have tinged his charge's very youthful face with a pathetic fatigue.

This adds to its delicate charm as she greets her compagnons de voyage very prettily, giving Captain Radetzky a pleasant, yet demure, bow, and placing her hand confidently in that of her master, who is removing

the robes in which he had wrapped his charge the night before. Their eyes meet—his in the strength of complete government; hers drooping before his glance, as if admitting her subjugation, yet appealing for his protection.

Noting this, he says, reassuringly: "Courage, Estelle; we will soon be on the steamboat."

"Where we are going to have breakfast," mutters the Austrian officer, who, apparently, has not only a

youthful face, but a youthful appetite.

Consequently, some few minutes after, the diligence drawing up near the river at Chalons, Estelle trips lightly, beside her protector, down to the Saone, which turbulent stream, swollen by big storms in the Vosges

Mountains, is now overflowing its banks.

Standing slightly apart from the crowd, who are struggling over the gangplank to the deck of the little sidewheeled steamer, whose paddle-boxes bear the name "Hirondelle," and whose wheels every now and then churn the muddy water of the current into a yellow foam in order to hold the boat to its moorings, the girl asks a question that since the evening before has been on her mind. She indicates, with a graceful nod of her head, the young Austrian, who already has gone on shipboard, and whispers, a little eagerness in her voice: "Do you, mio padrone, make an exception to your new friend in your general direction that I am to permit no attentions from gentlemen?"

"Oh, certainly!" answers Da Messina. "Radetzky is a fine fellow and a man of honor. Don't think me an ogre. Any reasonable liberty that I can give you to make your long journey more agreeable it will be al-

ways my pleasure to grant."

"Oh, thank you! Now I know how to treat Radetz-

ky," whispers his protégée.

A moment after, she finds herself very carefully supported by a strong arm across the slippery gangplank to the deck of the little boat, which is tugging at its moorings. This craft is a long, narrow, iron affair,

and is occupied by a *frangipanni* of big bales of freight, German Jews, barrels of wine, French viticulturalists, and a few tourists, English and American, bound for Switzerland and the French Riviera, for already the threatened political complications in Venice and Milan have turned pleasure-seekers from Italian travel.

Here Adrienne finds all care of herself taken from her. Her padrone leads her at once to the stewardess, and, pressing a five-franc piece into the woman's hand, tells her to do everything she can for mademoiselle.

"I shall reserve a place at the breakfast table for you,

petite," he says. "Be ready as soon as possible."

"That I will," she replies, blithely, "for I am as hungry as—as Captain Radetzky," favoring the Austrian, who is standing near, with a little smile.

At this the young man laughs: "Then you will be

sure to be with us at the first course."

Five minutes afterward, Estelle, coming into the salon, joins the gentlemen at the table d'hôte. Here, being placed in a chair between Da Messina and the young Austrian, she bites her lips once or twice, as she finds herself still treated like a little girl, and her breakfast ordered without her consultation. However, she enjoys her meal, and occasionally joins in the conversation of Radetzky and her potentate. A good deal of this is upon the flooded river, for everybody at the table is discussing the height of the stream, some local passengers giving their experiences in the great freshet of 1840, when Lyons suffered a partial inundation.

"Mille tonnerres!" remarks one. "The Saone is the very deuce of a stream to drown, not only lands, but peasants. God help anyone it catches unawares!"

The meal being over, Carlo takes Estelle out on the deck to look at the rushing river. They are in the middle of the stream; the current is a very rapid one. The usually green waters of the Saone are muddy, and the boat at times is violently swayed by the turbulent current, which tells of a great rainfall and melting snows in the Vosges Mountains.

But after a moment Adrienne gets accustomed to the rush of the waters, and listens quite interestedly to a musical discussion between her guardian and the Austrian officer. They are talking of the triumphs of Jenny Lind, who is now the reigning European prima donna, and Da Messina makes his *protégée* happy by saying: "Ah, yes, the Swedish nightingale! Birdlike voices are now the rage. My apprentice here, I have already noticed, has a linnet voice. Perhaps some day she will sing in 'La Sonnambula' and 'Puritani.'"

At this, wonder flames in his apprentice's expressive

face. She stammers: "What! 1?"

"Why not? You sang your scales with an extremely pure tone; though I hardly think you will have dramatic force enough for 'Norma' or 'Lucretia Borgia."

To this Adrienne is too astounded to make reply.

But Radetzky laughs: "Well, my little maid, you will have an open field in a year or two, as it is rumored that the Swedish diva, who is now enchanting London, will soon go to far-away America in search of Yankee dollars."

But the hoarse cries of the captain on the paddlebox again call their attention to their voyage down the river.

Adrienne notes that now, on her right hand and farther to the south, the Lyonnais hills are coming into view, though the low meadows are flooded on either bank of the Saone, whose turbulent current adds to the speed of their boat descending the river. Moving rapidly, they approach Trevoux, but here navigation, which is difficult in ordinary stages of the water, becomes more intricate, and is rendered even dangerous by a number of boats drawn by horses that block up the channel near a large stone quarry on the right bank.

The captain, on the paddle-box, is hallooing excited French commands to the helmsman, for they seem about

to run down one or two of these barges.

The young Austrian, saying lightly, "I'll see the affair," runs forward. In the immediate bow of the

boat are a lot of freight-boxes and bales, piled so high that they overhang the low bulwarks. Upon these Radetzky climbs rapidly.

"Sacré bleu! Get off of there!" interjects the cap-

tain, between some hoarse commands to the pilot. But Radetzky has no time to heed his warning before they come heavily in contact with one of the barges,

and the shock sends the young man overboard.

At this there is a scream from the female passengers and a howl from the men. In their excitement they throw toward him a heavy mahogany chair, which disappears in an eddy, and a cane settee, with cast-iron legs, that immediately sinks.

"Mille diables!" shrieks the French captain. "Unless he can swim like a duck, the Emperor of Austria

has lost a soldier!"

His words seem true, for, though fortunately carried away from the paddle-wheels by a rapid swirl of the current, the young man is left far behind the rapidly moving steamboat, that has disengaged itself from the slightly damaged barge, and is now paddling downstream.

"Mon Dieu! Save him!" cries Adrienne, excitedly. "Diavolo!" mutters the Italian. "He will surely. drown. He is as a baby in the water."

The girl's hurried glance at the face of her padrone catches a curious exultation in it. Perchance he is thinking: "Here's one less sword pointed at the breast of Italy."

But, half a second after, pity comes into Da Messina's eyes as he watches the unavailing but gallant struggles of the young Austrian, who, though he has strength and courage, has no skill in the water; and it would take a strong swimmer to carry himself successfully in the flooded Saone.

The next minute Estelle falters: "Oh, mercy! You --you are going---" For Da Messina is tossing off his coat and hastily removing his boots.

Then her scream rings out clear and shrill over the

noise of clanging engines, as this man, whose fetters she wears, dives from the stern of the boat and disappears for a moment in the swirling waters.

"Diable! The Italian idiot!" shrieks the captain.

"There are now two fools to drown!"

To the anxious eyes of the girl, standing trembling almost like a child, this seems to be the case, though to an expert, the Italian would seem a veritable merman, as he buffets the strong current, and, with the confident stroke of an exceedingly powerful swimmer, fights

his way toward the struggling Austrian.

But the engines are still revolving. The boat rapidly turns a sharp bend in the river, and the struggling merman is seen no more. Suddenly Adrienne starts—to her affrighted eyes everything grows dark. This man—her tyrant, yet her protector—is no more by her side; she is alone! She has even lost her former identity, which she can not regain without surrendering herself to the pursuing police as a criminal, self-condemned by an attempted escape. Her money is in this man's possession. In case of his death, even that would go to his relatives. She is penniless, as well as helpless.

But now she recollects the care this man had given her; that his touch had been tender as he wrapped her up from the cold; that he had sat awake thinking for her safety, while she had slept; that, though he has demanded implicit obedience, he has given, if not tenderness, at least protection. So his bound-girl, standing on the deck of the swaying boat, listening to the shouts of the French sailors, begins to weep for the Italian padrone who had forced her to give herself into his dominion.

"For whom are you blubbering?" asks a woman standing near her. "For the young Austrian officer, or the Italian?"

"For—for the Italian, my padrone, who—who is drowned," sighs the disconsolate girl, wiping her dimmed eyes with a handkerchief she has carelessly taken from the pocket of this dress unused since convent days.

"Ah! Then don't go to Italy, for they will sell your contract, and that means you, little one. I know about such things. I have been wardrobe woman of a theater in Naples. So you take my advice," remarks her counselor, in a matter-of-fact tone.

Then, as Adrienne looks despairingly out over the rushing waters, her adviser suddenly gives a start, and mutters: "This bound-girl must have seen better times—Mademoiselle is an aristocrat. Sacré, there's a coronet upon that nice lace handkerchief of hers!" And the envy of the mob against blue blood comes into the heart of the woman of the people.

But now the shouts from the captain on the paddle-box become joyous. With Gallic seamanship he has at last thought of reversing the engines, and the boat is now stationary on the flood. Then Adrienne gives a little fluttering cry. Gaining upon it at every stroke, Da Messina comes into sight, swimming stoutly, while Radetzky, still cool and collected, rests his left hand upon the shoulder of his preserver, who is now rapidly approaching the boat.

With excited, happy eyes, the girl flies to the gangway. As the young Austrian is pulled upon deck, the first hand extended to him is the beautiful one of Adrienne. She says: "Oh, I am so glad!" But when the Italian, with stout hand, pulls himself on board, looking at him with streaming eyes, she mutters: "Oh, if

you had died!"

"Diavolo, little one! I thought of that, and would not have jumped overboard, only I knew that I would live. That plunge was a mere bagatelle to one who, as a boy, lived half in the water, by the shore of the Bay of Naples, and, as a young man, played in the Mediterranean, day after day, with the strong swimmers of the Island of Malta. And so you feared for me?" His dark eyes search her mobile face.

"Oh, so much! I---"

"Thank you, child. But, with your permission, I will go to the cabin with my Austrian friend. The water is cold, and a glass of brandy will do me no harm "

Patting his protégée's brown locks with dripping hand, Carlo steps after the man he has saved, and, two or three minutes after, puts his head, which he is rubbing with a towel, out of the cabin window, and laughs: "Don't fear, petite, though I am going to disappear again. Captain Radetzky and I are for the cook's gallev to dry our clothes."

And, waiting for him, Adrienne, who now feels more than ever what his loss would be to her, mutters: "Holy Virgin! If I had been left alone! This proves that I am indeed his property."

Even as she says this, malicious words come to her

that give her an awful shock.

"Ventre bleu! You are the first girl I ever saw happy at getting her padrone back! But you are such a pretty tit-bit! Oh-ah! Doubtless he gives you more kisses than blows."

As these words are chuckled into her ear, Adrienne shudders, her face grows deathly pale, and she staggers from the property woman of the Naples theater. "If—if I thought that," she gasps, to herself, "I'd let them take me back to Paris, or jump into this river. But she's a bad woman, and he-he-is-"

She trembles and stammers at the thought of meeting her padrone; the suggestion has been an awful one to her.

But as her dictator shortly after strolls to her, in

smoking clothes that suggest a very hasty drying, her eyes, catching his glance, grow relieved. With him comes the young officer, who, gazing upon

his preserver, warmly remarks: "You saved my life, even though I am an Austrian. Our countries may fight, but we at least shall be friends."

He extends an eager hand, which is clasped by the Italian. So the three stand together, as the boat, coming rapidly down the Saone, passes the Ile-Barbe, and, darting under numerous bridges, lands them at the Quai de Tilsit.

As Da Messina holds out his hand to help his ward ashore, he glances sharply at her face, and whispers: "You have something to tell me?"

" No, I---"

"Oh, don't try to deny it." His tone is imperative. "As I turned my head away I saw that woman whisper to you. You must tell me her words."

Gazing at him, his bound-girl's face becomes red as

the setting sun.

Da Messina gives a hasty glance at the ex-wardrobe mistress of the Naples theater, who is stepping over the gangplank, and, leading Estelle a little aside where two big piles of bales and barrels upon the quay give them privacy, and the rumble of the passing vehicles of busy Lyons drowns their voices, he whispers: "You must tell me."

"I-please don't ask me!"

"Quick! Seconds are important."

"You think it is vital?" asks his charge, gazing at him astonished.

"In our position everything, anything, may be vital to you and me. Quick—tell me!" The intensity of his manner forces her confidence.

Her face grows very pale, then red as fire. But, looking him straight in the eyes, as if to discern how the suggestion affects him, under her breath, falteringly, yet resolutely, Estelle tells him the awful suggestion of the ex-wardrobe mistress of the Naples theater.

His very manner of receiving it gives her relief.

"Diavolo!" he laughs, as she finishes. "I thought the woman some accursed Austrian agent, trying to pump you about me. Forget that miserable's words. In truth, my knowledge of this padrone business has so far been that of an onlooker. You are the first who has ever come under my rule. Pergolese makes money by his own voice—not by the voices of others," he adds, proudly.

"I-I am your first bound-girl?" stammers Estelle,

a strange contentment in her voice.

Perchance catching this, he jeers lightly: "More kisses than blows, the woman said!" then adds, somewhat sadly: "To you, I suppose I must always be a taskmaster. You had better hate me for severity than think too well of me for being kind."

"Oh, no, no! Don't say that," she dissents, in

broken voice.

As she moves impulsively, he catches the graceful lines of her figure, and thinks what her developing

beauty will become.

"Cospetto, don't contradict me, child!" he mutters, as if restraining himself. His mien grows commanding, his voice stern, as he crushes her with: "Look upon me always as your tyrant!" Then his tone changes; he says, lightly: "But come along, petite. Radetzky is waiting to bid us adieu."

A moment after, upon the open quay, they join the young officer, who fervidly embraces his preserver, saying, eagerly: "I shall not leave by diligence till Monday morning. Why don't you come to the same hotel with me, the De L'Europe?"

"With Estelle under my wing, I prefer quieter and cheaper quarters. Dine with me to-morrow at the Ta-

rascon," replies the cavaliere.

"Certainly. Only to-night you must sup with me. *Mein Gott*, if it hadn't been for your stout arm, I would this evening have fed fishes instead of you, my friend!"

"With all my heart," replies Da Messina, who, to Adrienne, seems anxious to increase his intimacy with the Austrian. "In addition, suppose you, and my charge and I, if it is pleasant, take to-morrow afternoon a Sunday jaunt, and see the sights at the Observatory?"

"Agreed!" cries the Viennese. "And thanks, also, to you, my little friend," he adds, "for your welcoming

hand and anxious eyes when I was pulled on board

again."

He raises his hat to Estelle, who returns his salute very prettily, as her governor calls a carriage, and orders: "Hotel Tarascon, quick!"

A second later, Madame la Baronne finds herself placed in the vehicle, Da Messina quickly taking a seat beside her. As they drive off, she can not help blushing at the intimacy her station gives him. Her padrone's occupying a closed carriage en tête-à-tête with her seems a matter of course both to him and to the Austrian.

Suddenly he startles her with: "Were you wiping your eyes on the steamboat with that handkerchief, with the tell-tale coronet upon it?"

"Oh, I forgot! It—it must have been in this pocket for years," stammers his protégée. In my agitation for you, I—I thought you were drowned. Pardon me!"

"And you were sorry, pawrette, that I——" Carlo checks himself shortly, then mutters: "Maladetto! If anyone noticed it, this may be very unfortunate."

He knits his brows in concentrated thought till they are in the courtyard of the old-fashioned Hotel Tarascon, where the young widow is soon to be thoroughly appalled at the easy familiarity of padrone to ap-

prentice.

The Hotel Tarascon is a little hostelry in the heart of the business portion of Lyons, near the Rue Centrale. It is kept by a certain Signora Annina, who had once been a prima danseuse in half the capitals of Europe, and now, having grown obese, has taken for her helpmate a well-known Italian chef, Brisco by name. This artist's cooking being good, the place is well frequented by the Italian colony of Lyons.

The fat face of their hostess welcomes them at the entrance. She cries, "Carlo, you boy, I expected you!" and hands him a letter; then goes effusively on: "The sight of you makes me young again. I can remember the last time I danced at La Scala." And commands

one or two white aproned attendants: "The best rooms in the house for the best voice in Italy!" But, gazing a little farther into the carriage, she ejaculates: "Oho!

This is the apprentice you wrote about!"

"Of course!" replies the tenor, dexterously avoiding a maternal kiss from the fat, old lady. "Estelle, Signora Brisco will take good care of you," deftly gaining his hostess's good offices for his charge by whispering: "I shall have to consult you in regard to her, Annina."

"Certo!" answers the ex-ballerina. "Come along, my child, with the staid old landlady, who once had nobles at her feet."

As she speaks, they ascend a flight of broad, stone steps, and Estelle is led into the *suite* that has been assigned to her padrone. It consists of a big parlor and three other rooms. The brick floor of the first is made comfortable by rugs, and its large windows are ornamented by draperies. A fire has been hastily kindled in the great open fireplace. One diagonal corner of it opens into the private apartment of her *maestro*.

A startled timidity flies through her as the landlady points to a door on the opposite side of the parlor, and announces: "There is your little chamber, petite. She will be quite under your eye, cavaliere," babbles the woman. "No running out, except she passes your door."

But, Da Messina glancing over the letter in his hand, knits his brow, and says, shortly: "I have important business, so I will leave Estelle in your charge, Signora Brisco. See that she has everything she wants, and a nice little dinner."

Drawing his apprentice aside, he whispers: "This letter tells me I shall have to stay at least three days in Lyons."

Then, turning to his hostess, who has been occupied in stirring up the fire and opening a piano, which stands in a corner of the room, he suggests: "This

child's wardrobe is very defective. Replenish her costumes. Bring the bills to me. This must be done immediately."

"Ghieu!" remarks the woman. "But I can get her simple frocks in quick order. I have two sewing-

girls in the house."

"See that her outfit is complete," says Da Messina, sharply. "Only make her wardrobe plain, youthful,

and girlish."

"Won't I? With her bright face, all I have to do is to take those hideous bags from around her ankles and she will be an infant!" cries La Brisco, with a grin.

"But en avant, petite."

With this she shows the fugitive into a cozy little bedroom, which contains a pretty, white cot, where, an hour after, Madame la Baronne finds a pleasant little dinner served by her hostess in person, who probably has had some further instructions from Da Messina.

"I've brought a dressmaker with me, so after dinner we will get to work," she says. "To-morrow

morning you breakfast with your padrone."

Some few hours after this, night has come upon Lyons. Finding herself very tired, the white cot looks inviting to Estelle. She timidly, hesitatingly, and slowly undresses and steps toward the bed.

Suddenly, some new emotion flying through her, she

runs hastily to her bedroom door to lock it.

But discovering no key, her face grows agitated. She falters: "I am to be here—in this man's apartments—every night, under his eye—under his hand! Verily my bondage throws down the barriers of society betwixt me and he who holds me."

Then to her acute ears comes the sound of the big door opening from the corridor upon their parlor. She

recognizes her master's step.

A bashful terror comes upon her. She begins to tremble. Blushes fly in waves over her anxious face. She stands, shrinking, draped in her white *robe de nuit*, whose sheer muslin outlines the graces of her fair,

young form. Were it not for the throbbing of her heart, upheaving the laces on her snowy bosom, she would be like a statue of affrighted modesty. Suddenly there is the sound of a turning key and clicking bolt. She knows she is locked in now with this man whom she has rashly given such power over her.

His step is coming toward her door! She looks about as if to fly, but knows she has no place of

refuge.

But, doing this, she starts again. Her senses seem confused; entrancing strains float all about her. A noble voice breaks in upon her, passionate, romantic, dominant. She murmurs, "Dio, how beautiful!" and, forgetting even the terror of modesty, stands listening, for it is the first time she has heard the voice of her maestro uplifted in glorious melody. Accompanying himself upon the piano, he is singing Auber's song of Masaniello, those impassioned strains in which the Naples fisherman cried out to his fellows of the sea beach and market place to rise against their tyrants.

Listening, she knows that it is the voice not only of a patriot, but of a conspirator that puts wild passion and almost savage ferocity, yet withal noble courage into the grand music that thrills her heart. Suddenly it dies away. A moment later she hears hoarsely muttered: "Thank God, at last it is time to strike!" And to her, in great sighs, comes: "My brother, whom the Austrians killed at Padua, because he sung his student's song of liberty, if you were but here to strike with me! Marco! My Marco!"

And this tyrant she fears staggers into his own

room, sobbing as if his heart would break.

"Fool that I was to think that this man, with great things upon his mind, would sully his patriot hands by doing an ignoble act!" she jeers. Then, a strange, pathetic archness coming in her voice, she murmurs: "He thinks not enough of me to even say good night."

So, with a little plaintive pout, but with her mind relieved, Estelle steps into her little cot, and, nestling

down in its pillows, places her round, white arms wearily over her brown tresses, and so goes to sleep, wondering in a dreamy way whether the world is turned upside down. At all events, she knows she is!

CHAPTER VIII.

"WE MUST STRIKE, BEFORE THE FLOWERS BLOOM!"

About eleven o'clock next morning, as Da Messina is sitting before his breakfast table in their parlor, his charge comes tripping in from her chamber, and, giving him a formal courtesy, murmurs: "Good morning, mio padrone."

Madame la Baronne is looking very pretty and very bashful, perchance because she feels decidedly en famille with this handsome gentleman, who sits in a jaunty, well-braided smoking jacket, and that evidence of domestic privacy, a comfortable pair of slippers. In addition, she is slightly ill at ease in the new frock which La Brisco has had made for her overnight. simple, brown costume, quite graceful and very girlish; for, with a professional love of freedom for the lower limbs, the signora has had its skirt cut an inch or two shorter than the one in which Adrienne had traveled. and also removed from the young lady's ankles what the ex-ballerina calls the two hideous bags. fore Madame la Baronne's graces are more en evidence to her master, her slippered feet and beautifully moulded ankles being in the full display of girlhood.

"You are rather late, and apparently not very hungry, petite," remarks the cavaliere, as he acknowledges

her salute.

"Oh, yes! But I had been out at mass with the signora. You don't object to that, do you?"

"To your religion? Not at all. Would that I were a better churchman! But sit down," he says, cordially. "It is our first breakfast en tête-à-tête."

"Cospetto!" interjects their landlady, who has come in with the meal in person. "If Estelle were a few years older, one might think it a honeymoon affair!" And she goes chuckling out, leaving embarrassment behind her.

The padrone has rather a quizzical smile on his face; the young widow is bending a very blushing head over her plate.

"Permit me to offer you some omelet," says the gen-

tleman, suavely.

"Yes, thank you," murmurs his pupil, her face a little turned from his.

" And a roll?"

"Whatever you think best. You've selected my repasts very nicely for me ever since I came under your rule," she answers, giving him a shy, yet grateful, glance, adding, hurriedly: "Let me do something for you."

"I don't see anything," he laughs, running his eyes over the breakfast table. "The meal seems to be a

good one."

"I—I could pour out your coffee for you," she suggests, impulsively. "I—I always did it for my husband," and pauses astounded at the effect-upon her maestro.

A frown ripples his face, then he looks coldly at her, and commands, sternly: "Have I not forbidden you to speak of that old man? Your past is dead."

"You-you make it a blank," she pouts.

"It must be, to save you."

He passes over to her the *Journal de Lyons*, in which Estelle sees her old name—the name she is trying to forget—in big letters, with some headlines beneath it that make her shudder.

"I-I see. You are right," she assents.

"You observe," he returns, "they haven't guessed so very far from us. A rumor says the criminal has fled with one of her lovers en route to Italy."

"O-o-oh!" With a half sob of embarrassment, his

pupil hides her head in her hands.

"But fortunately they are not quite sure of the exact route," he continues, philosophically. "They have traced the fair fugitive as far as Montereau, but at that point are in doubt. You see that evening a lady and gentleman on horseback left that town, going toward Montargis. But that clew will be worked out very shortly. This paper hints that the officers will await Madame la Baronne at Marseilles."

"Then-then I am lost!"

"Not at all, if you are sufficiently circumspect. I am sorry I spoiled your breakfast," adds Da Messina, who apparently has a very good appetite. Then he continues, in cautious voice: "Only absolute, untiring vigilance will get you out of France. To-morrow evening I have made arrangements for you to sign your indenture to me. It may be necessary to show this document at any time."

"You don't think there is any immediate danger?"

she queries, uneasily.

"Not if you are very careful."

Encouraged by these words, Estelle, whose face has grown pale, now contrives to make a better ending to

the meal than her beginning.

"In order to have everything en règle, you must be, in word and deed, my apprentice," observes Da Messina. "The people in this hotel must hear you practicing your music under my direction. The harsh words of a stern master, coming to the curious ears of passers-by in yonder corridor, perchance at times, punctuated by a little sob from careless pupil, will remove every doubt that thy padrone is berating his apprentice. To-morrow morning we begin work!" Then he adds, in more kindly tone, to Estelle, who has a shade of anxiety upon her delicate face: "Now, petite, you have just time to get ready for our little trip across the Saone. You remember I made the appointment yesterday with our Austrian friend." His voice hesi-

tates a little on the last word. "You would like to go?"

"Oh, very much!"

"Then run away, and get on your things. Wrap up well, for the day is brisk, though the sun is bright."

And she tripping to her chamber, he gazes after her, and murmurs: "I am afraid I frightened my protégée;" then mutters, shortly, "but it is best we are only master and apprentice," and departs to make his own toilet.

A few minutes afterward, the young Austrian coming into their apartment, Da Messina greets him cordially; then calls out: "Are you ready for our little excursion, Estelle?"

And his ward entering, a short, brown, childish wrap about her dainty figure, and a dark hat upon the bands of her wavy hair, Captain Radetzky opens his eyes at the pretty sight, and observes: "Mademoiselle is recovered from the fatigues of the journey, I see!"

"As you have from your ducking, I hope, Monsieur le Capitaine," she answers brightly, as she returns his

bow with a demure little courtesy.

Five minutes after, they make their way through two or three rather narrow and dirty unsidewalked streets, and come to the Saone, which, though falling, is still in flood.

Here, crossing the Pont du Change, they arrive at that strange, little street, lined with dirty shops containing religious pictures, relics, curios, and effigies in wax and tallow, which leads up to the heights of Fourvieres. They have all been walking together, Estelle chatting quite blithely with the Austrian; but here, the way being contracted, Da Messina says: "Run ahead of us, child."

At her guardian's gesture, his charge trips up the steep ascent before the gentlemen, making a very girlish, yet alluring, picture.

The Austrian's eyes follow her closely. He remarks admiringly: "You have quite a prize in your appren-

tice, my dear Pergolese. Did you notice her rather mature, yet bitter, remark about the position of a widow in France? Your *protégée*, if she has as fine a voice as

she has mind, will make a great success."

"Humph—yes! Still, she is a great responsibility," answers Da Messina, noting, with clouded brow, that some admiring tourists and a man, in the uniform of one of the Lyons steamboats, have placed their eyes upon his ward, whose diffidence under public comment seems to make her attractive to onlookers.

"Well, she appears as modest as she is pretty. If she has talent, her indenture papers should be worth quite a sum to you," remarks Radetzky.

"Diavolo! I think she has both voice and ability,"

returns the cavaliere, decidedly.

"The little maiden seemed to have a good heart and plenty of sympathy in her soul when she greeted us as we escaped drowning. You must do great things for her, Pergolese, and—Mein Himmel!—I will help you do it!"

With this he makes a proposition to his friend which causes Da Messina to open his eyes; but, catching sight of the beautiful creature, who, having reached the top of the ascent, is now outlined against the blue sky, he answers: "Thank you for wishing to do so much for her, but I can not consent. I value her too highly."

The last of these words drift to Estelle, as she stands upon the hill of Fourvieres. A tinge of embarrassment ripples her mobile features, for she guesses they refer to her. Suddenly she starts, and forgets all save the

magnificent scene before her.

At her feet is Lyons, the main portion of the city medieval in its crowded houses and narrow streets till it reaches the green lime trees of the Place Bellecour. The sun is shining on the two rivers—the flashing Saone and the more stately Rhone—which once bounded the town, but now intersect it. Beyond these is a great valley, drifting away, in one immense level plateau, toward the east, to become, in the far distance, an

indistinct haze. But, above this seeming horizon, rise, peak after peak, and rampart after rampart, the faraway Alps, while, like a great white cloud of heaven, above them all, towers, grand and magnificent, the best-known mountain upon this earth.

"What is it?" she says, shading her eyes, for the

sun, gleaming upon it, makes it almost dazzling.

"Mont Blanc, petite," answers her guardian, who now stands beside her.

"Beyond that snow-line," cries the Austrian, "is Milan, where, I hope, il Cavaliere da Messina and I will have many a pleasant evening together. You remember, my dear Pergolese, you promised me a presentation to the reigning prima donna. Some evening we will arrange a petit souper, graced by la belle Olinska, eh, mon ami?"

Starting at the name, Estelle, gazing at her padrone, notes that he makes no immediate reply. Then, apparently controlling himself, the Italian says slowly: "We shall always be good friends. You, I presume, Captain Radetzky, go to Italy by Switzerland?"

"Yes, to-morrow! Come with me!" cries the young officer, earnestly. "It is the nearest way," he urges.

"But I dread winter's snows for this young girl," answers the tenor. "Besides, I may sing a night or two in Marseilles. If so, it will be the first time I have ever trod the French stage."

"Will you?" cries Estelle, so eagerly that both the gentlemen laugh a little, and the Austrian remarks: "I don't wonder you are anxious to hear Pergolese," adding: "I always admire the frankness of the very

young."

Then they stroll into the chapel, and look at the relics of saints and curious pictures of shipwrecked sailors, with votive offerings for their salvation. Tiring of this, they wander about the Roman ruins; but, the afternoon growing late, they soon walk down the little narrow street again, and take a different bridge to cross the Saone.

While going down the stone steps that lead to it, Estelle trips lightly ahead of the two gentlemen, and Da Messina sees the man, dressed as the steamboat attaché, watching her furtively. Twice before, this day, he has noticed this fellow's eyes upon his ward, once going up the hill, a second time in the Chapel of Notre Dame at the summit.

For an instant his brows contract in nervous thought; then he suddenly cries, loudly and savagely: "Estelle, don't run so far ahead of us! Have a care, or I'll——"He cuts off his speech with threatening gesture.

This coming to her ears in a harsher tone than he had ever before used to her, the warned one's eyes flash with indignant fire; then her lips quiver, and she hangs her head.

"Mein Gott! Don't speak so sharply to the child," whispers the Austrian, adding these curious words: "I double my offer, Da Messina!"

"It is again refused!" returns the other, but continues, apologetically: "You don't understand my rea-

son for my apparent sternness."

"Herr Gott Himmel! There can be no reason for it," mutters the young officer. "See! Tears are in her beautiful eyes. You don't understand your responsibilities, my friend, with that tender heart."

"Don't I?" says the other, his face growing curiously troubled, as the two walk on together, apparently not

on as good terms as they had been before.

As for Estelle, she seems for a moment crushed.

At the Tarascon, Da Messina says: "Just wait downstairs, Radetzky, for a few minutes, until I have dinner properly ordered. Besides, I want to make an apology to mademoiselle."

"She deserves one!" returns the Austrian, sternly. But, scarce heeding him, Carlo follows Estelle, and the padrone and his bound-girl being together in his parlor, he suddenly turns her to him and whispers: "Forget my words."

"How can I? Chided in public—threatened before him!"

"My words were to give you safety. You noticed that man dressed as a steamboat official?"

"Yes." Her face, that was indignant, grows anxious.

"Three times I saw him watching you with a mouchard's eye. I fear the fellow suspects you. Basta! but he will hardly imagine that the lover of Madame la Baronne would treat her as an Italian padrone does his bound-girl."

"Oh, you did it for my sake? I—I forgive you," replies the girl, extending an eager hand. To her astonishment, he seizes her white fingers and kisses them

tenderly.

With a little bashful cry, she runs into her chamber, and half an hour afterward comes out, a strange look of happiness upon her face.

"We are en fête this evening. We are going to give our friend a good-by!" cries her guardian, apparently

happy himself.

Gazing about, Estelle sees a table decked with flowers and sparkling crystal and the service of an elaborate dinner. Radetzky is already in the room, and they

make a merry triangular meal of it.

Estelle, seated with a gentleman on either hand, forgets, in listening to their conversation, her sad position. Perchance made more vivacious by sparkling champagne, her fair face this night has a new look upon it, one scarce definable, yet potent enough to make the young Austrian observe: "You seem in great spirits this evening, Mademoiselle; and I also perceive your guardian has made his peace with you."

"Oh, I have forgiven him!" she murmurs, and rather astonishes Radetzky by adding archly: "I knew mio padrone didn't mean to be very cross. I am going to be Pergolese's favorite pupil, am not I, maestro?"

"Corpo di San Marco! That is easy!" laughs Da

Messina. "I shall have but one." The emphasis on the "one" makes his bound-girl's eyes sparkle.

"Can't you sing for us," suggests the Austrian to her, as they move from the table, "so that I can note the improvement in your voice when I hear you again in Italy? You are going to let me see Mademoiselle in Milan, are you not, Carlo?" he inquires of her master.

"Of course, Franz! I do not intend to make Estelle a novice in the temple of art." To this he adds: "Won't you sing for us, little one? Do not be frightened. It will not be to the criticism of the scribes or the public, but only of friends—you'll let me say that, won't you?"

"I-I haven't been practicing much. You know

that!"

"Ah! You like to make a successful first appearance," he laughs. "Let me encourage you. I will sing first! Corpo di Baccho, I am not afraid!"

"Mein Gott! Will you, in private?" cries the Aus-

trian, eagerly.

"Peste, I always sing better when I am not paid for it," says the cavaliere. And seating himself at the piano, with the dash, certainty, and élan of a great artist who has nearly everything in current music at his tongue's end, he sings for them half a dozen morceaux, ranging from "La Bella del Re" of "La Favorita" to a little love song of Schubert, tender as a maiden's heart. These are all different, and of wonderful variety, but, as he delivers them, are all not only masterpieces of technique, but the very outpouring of an ardent soul, whose best expression is through song.

For a few moments there is a silence more complimentary than applause; tears are in Estelle's sympa-

thetic eyes.

Then she feels the hand of the *maestro* upon her arm; she is led to the piano, and sings for them, rather tremblingly and quite bashfully, a couple of show pieces, such as young ladies achieve at convent graduation.

"Cospetto, thy voice is worthy of better music!"

mutters Da Messina, though Radetzky applauds vigorously.

And, this being over, her padrone, who, apparently, wishes to have some private conversation with their guest, remarks: "Estelle, to-morrow you begin work at nine o'clock, so it is time for thee to be in bed, little one. Say good night to Captain Radetzky."

"But not, I hope, good-by," she suggests, cordially,

as she extends her hand to the Austrian.

And he, taking it delicately in his fingers, kisses it respectfully, and murmurs: "Of course! 'Tis but an au revoir. You have a friend in me. In Milan, call on Franz Radetzky, if he can be of service to you."

Careless words, but the young captain means them, and in their truth is a great deal more to the pretty girl who listens to him than at this time she imagines.

Then, after a courtesy to her master, Estelle going out, the Austrian says: "Three times my offer, my dear Carlo!"

"Why do you wish it?" asks the Italian, a tinge of

suspicion in his tone.

"Because I can never become famous in art myself, and I would like to shine through reflected genius. Some day I think that little girl in there"—he points to the door of Estelle's chamber—" will become famous."

"Per Baccho!" cries the Italian, impulsively. "You think, Franz, she will make a prima donna? So do I! No great, tragic, Lucretia of the stage, but a fairy-voiced Linda, who'd charm a harder heart than yours or mine, Radetzky!" He looks at his friend with searching eyes, and continues, decidedly: "I am compelled to again refuse you. Ask anything but that."

"Very well. We will smoke the pipe of peace together, and then I'll go on my way to the De L'Europe," remarks the young Austrian, with a little sigh,

as he lights a cigar.

Whereupon the two gentlemen, who have become more than comrades, and call each other Franz and

Carlo, over an additional bottle of wine and some excellent Havanas, pass a pleasant hour or two together, their conversation touching upon art, music, Parisian social life—on anything but politics, but at times directed with curious eagerness by Da Messina.

After they have shaken hands and said farewell, and the Austrian has again whispered, "I owe my life to you! Good luck and happiness till we meet at Milan!" and gone down the stairs, Da Messina mutters to himself, a strange triumph in his voice: "I got the secret I wanted out of him! It was a dastard trick, because he has a true heart and—he loves me. But putting together what Franz Radetzky said last night and a careless word or two picked up to-day, as we wandered about the chapel of Notre Dame, and that little remark he made about his uncle, the sturdy old Governor of Milan, I know that sixty thousand re-enforcements are ordered to join the Austrian troops in Italy. These can not come till spring. We must strike in Lombardy before the flowers bloom!" Then he glances toward the room where his pretty charge is now sleeping, and comments: "Tricking my friend out of military secrets that his honor compels him to guard—treating this poor girl, whose very assumed childish graces give her new charms for me-" But here he checks himself by jeering: "'Twere a scurvy trick, my Italian conspirator, to strive to win a woman's heart when putting the halter about thy neck! No, no! My only safety, her best fate, is that I am but the strict padrone to my sweet captive. Cospetto! To-morrow I must be so stern to her that she will hate me."

Carlo da Messina's face is strangely sad, his expression very tender. He tosses a kiss with his hand twice, daintily, lovingly, toward the door that keeps his eyes from his exquisite bound-girl, and with a sigh turns to his lonely chamber.

CHAPTER IX.

"HOW'S THAT FOR A CLOSE-FISTED BRITISH LOVER OF LIBERTY?"

As the clock strikes nine the next morning, Estelle, obedient to her padrone's instructions, trips into the little parlor to find before her a gentleman who seems a taskmaster. Even as Da Messina returns her greeting, he says: "Now to business; come with me to the piano! Let me see what you can do with that instrument." His tone is that of the pedagogue, though he draws the piano-stool out for her, and seats her carefully upon it.

She has scarce played twenty bars when he stops her, saying: "More of that is unnecessary. You will never make a great pianist."

"Oh, but the sisters said I played very well!"

"For an amateur young lady, perhaps for the salon, but never for the concert stage. Those delicate hands" —he takes one of hers in his and regards it critically— "haven't the power of a piano-thumper. If you play well enough for your accompaniments, that will be all that is necessary. Now, your voice! Don't be frightened. I already think it a beautiful one. Stand up! I will play your accompaniment. Tell me the three simple songs you know best; not the trash you warbled last night." And she mentioning them to him, he says: "They will do well enough to test you." He runs his fingers over the keys, and at his word, tremblingly at first, but encouraged once or twice by the pleased look on his face, Estelle goes through the numbers. "Sing me that last song again," he says, "and hold that high B-flat, adding to it this little embellishment." He hums a few notes of fioriture.

And, she doing his bidding, as she finishes he springs up, and astonishes her by saying: "Bravo! Some day I'll make you a prima donna!"

"Oh, you think I can sing?"

"Yes, beautifully, but with lots of practice and an immensity of hard work!" he replies. "You have the voice of a linnet, marred by some atrocious faults, but you have, also, a very good ear. Remember, accuracy of intervals is the first thing to be attained," adding, enthusiastically: "With such promise, I shall work you very hard."

With this, he arranges and explains several vocal exercises for her, directing: "You will practice these very carefully, and as constantly as possible, but not over an hour at one time, until I can give you others." Her little coroneted watch being left at the bankers' in Troyes, he places his big, gold one on a nearby table, remarking: "Time the length of your exercise by this. Your voice must be strengthened, but never tired. Remember that! Sing loud! Let them hear you in that corridor; let any curious listener know that my boundgirl is hard at work! Now, how is our Italian?" he adds. "Bring me that little book we purchased at Troves. Thanks! Let us hear what you have learned."

He seats himself, and, at his sign, Madame la Baronne stands before him, almost unconsciously taking the pose of a school-girl at recitation. As his eyes rest upon her, Carlo thinks she never looked more attractive. A slight flush of anxiety on her face gives piquancy to her delicate and emotional features. Her little slippered feet, their heels tight together, their toes turned demurely out, seem nervous under his gaze. Once or twice her graceful knee gives a spasmodic jerk.

In truth, Estelle is very well aware that she knows next to nothing on the subject about which she is to be questioned, and wonders how her maestro will accept it. Her preceptor very shortly discovers this also, and remarks, severely: "You don't seem to appreciate, Mademoiselle, that my suggestions to you are commands."

"On the contrary," she says, her great eyes gazing truthfully into his; "I-I knew it was a task!" Then breaks out almost passionately: "But how could I remember anything in the agitation of hearing that the

papers said I was a-"

"Sh—h!" His hand is placed gently upon her lips. "Be careful!" he whispers; then goes on in louder voice, a little chagrin in his tone: "But afterward—later in the day, and upon the boat—there was a hand-some young officer with us also to distract Mademoiselle's attention."

"I—I thought not of him," she replies, indignantly. "I remembered your commands—no glances at gentlemen. I—I simply don't know my lesson, because——"

"Peste, don't let me have any more excuses!" he interrupts, sharply. "The next time I question you, you must know this, or I shall punish you. Italian is the language of art. It must be your language. But now I have some weighty things to arrange. Sapristi! For you, little one, I have forgotten my breakfast."

He steps out of the room, and she, gazing after him, thinks bitterly: "Why has he so changed since last night? Why is he so cold, so severe?" and, in a dejected way, goes to practicing the vocal exercises he has assigned her.

This is quite suddenly broken in upon. The parlor door is so hurriedly opened that Estelle gives a start. The cavaliere stands before her, his face anxious, his

mien agitated.

"Quick! That fellow is about this house!" he whispers. "In the dining-room he served my breakfast under a waiter's apron. Is there anything that connects you in the slightest with your former life, except the dress you wore at Troyes? To destroy that would be suspicious."

After a hurried examination, she comes running in to him, and murmurs in sad voice: "This—this hand-kerchief is the only thing that makes me aught save Estelle, your apprentice."

"But your trunk! It has no marks upon it? I

must be sure of that!" Running into her room, he finds a placard or two which shows another and former route of travel, and he orders hastily: "Some hot water! Wash this off, while I get rid of this. 'We must make a clean house,' as the Carbonari say."

Estelle has scarce obeyed his instructions and removed the labels from her trunk, when she hears Da Messina in the parlor again. He is ringing the bell, and asking that Signora Brisco be sent to him.

Then he calls his apprentice, and she coming to him,

he whispers: "That handkerchief is smoke."

A moment later, La Brisco stands with them. To their landlady he says: "I leave here to-morrow, so that you must see that the rest of my apprentice's

wardrobe is ready for her."

"Oh, all that's nearly finished now!" answers the signora, briskly. "Two other dresses for every-day use, and a white frock when she sings for you and your friends in the evening. I have heard her voice. It's a nice one, isn't it? Reminds me of that old canary bird, Pasta. Besides, if well taught, she would make perhaps a passable dancer. She's got pretty, flexible legs, though a little squeamish about showing them."

"Your account for these matters of dress?" inter-

jects Da Messina, impatiently.

"It'll come in with your bill when you leave," remarks the landlady. Then, in the interests of trade, she suggests: "Another dinner party this evening?"

"No. I have other business," replies il cavaliere, as she goes away, and, turning to Estelle, he adds: "You know what that is! The notary will be here with me at nine o'clock to-night. Until then I must say adieu. Keep up your spirits. If anything awkward happens to you, notify me immediately at this address." He hands her a business card. "For your own sake, remain strictly in these rooms."

And so he goes away, leaving the girl gazing at the peculiar address he has left with her, for the business card reads: "Johnston Judkins, Agent for the Bir-

mingham Arms Company, with Gervaise et Cie, No. 47 Rue Grolee."

She puts this in her pocket, and spends a day that would be dismal, did she not, fearing to displease her padrone, practice her exercises most assiduously, and even master a few Italian irregular verbs, though in truth her studies are disjointed by passing sounds; she shudders at every unfamiliar step upon the corridor.

So, it comes to pass at nine o'clock this evening that a very pathetic young lady enters the parlor to find her maestro awaiting her, together with an official-looking gentleman, who is seated at a nearby table, making some additions to a document which bears several stamps and indorsements.

As she courtesys to her guardian, and acknowledges the stranger's bow, the notary can not help thinking: "A charming yet extremely diffident girl; she blushes every time I look at her."

As for Pergolese, pity comes to him as he notes his ward's eyes and guesses she considers that she is robed for sacrifice.

Estelle is all in white, even to the slippers and silk stockings that the short bouffant skirt of muslin places in ample evidence. Being frocked for evening, her ivory shoulders are modestly displayed by a kind of baby waist, whose sleeves, held up by ribbon bows, leave bare her gracefully rounded arms, which gleam, snowy, in the lamplight. To give her extreme youth, her luxuriant hair has been unplaited, and hangs tossing in brown curls over her sloping shoulders, fettered only by a single satin ribbon.

Anxious to get the matter over, Da Messina, beckoning her to him, says: "Estelle, this is the official who will take your acknowledgment by which you assent to your apprenticeship to me. The document was drawn up in Paris, and signed by your parents there. As you are sixteen years of age, it is well that your signature be upon it also."

Then, addressing the notary, he asks: "Is every-

thing ready?"

"Quite so. I will now accept the girl's acknowledgment," says the official, and, turning to the candidate, he asks her in business routine: "Your name is Estelle Gabrielle Chartres?"

And Madame la Baronne, being compelled to untruth, whispers: "Yes!"

"You will sign here!" the notary says.

Her limbs tremble as she sinks into a chair they have placed for her, and her eyes swim as she contrives to scribble her new signature upon the paper, and, holding up her hand, gives her acknowledgment, and by document becomes the bound-girl of Carlo da Messina.

A moment later they are alone, the notary having bowed himself out.

Two burning tears fall upon the paper, as his charge strides up to Carlo, her eyes blazing, and places the indenture in his hand. To him she says, hoarsely: "This, coupled with my sacred oath to you, makes me yours! For I dare never assume my rightful name."

"Yes," he answers, a repressed triumph in his voice.

"Now I am indeed your padrone!"

On this, Estelle's eyes lose their fire; she steals a little hand into his strong clasp, and pleads: "Oh, God, put mercy in your heart for me!"

"You—you are sorry?" Da Messina asks, despite his resolution returning the pressure of her clinging fingers, for his captive in her pathos is very beautiful.

"Who would not be sorry," she bursts forth, "in my awful position? A false name—a false identity! I, who was once a baroness, am now only your—your serf! That's what this paper means—that's what it really is!"

"Trust me, little one," he says, in kindly tone, and would place his hand soothingly upon the floating curls, which take varying tints of bronze and brown under the lamplight.

But she turns upon him, and with feminine instinct falters: "I-I can see by your face that you mean to hold me to my indentures, after we are in Italy."

"Did not I tell you," replies her padrone, "that, in order for you to escape extradition to France, in order that my trip to this country may seem to have been a business one to Austrian inquisitors—for your safety, as well as mine—I must hold you as my apprentice."

"But after that? This document is for seven years.

You still mean to keep me?"

Here a strange feeling, that he has fought against, but which has been growing in his heart, overcoming him, he cries: "Diavolo! With such a voice as yours, YES!" adding, enthusiastically, "Did not I tell you that I would make you a prima donna!" then goes on, hurriedly, as if to justify himself: "Cospetto, is that not enough! Besides, thy indentures "-he taps the document he holds in his hand—"are valuable. For them the Austrian officer offered me a mighty sum."

At this unfortunate remark, a kind of torture comes in Estelle's face; her lips tremble; her cheeks glow red as fire, then turn pallid; as, wringing her hands, she moans: "Bargained for, as if a slave! To thy shame-

to his shame-to my shame!"

"No, no!" he cries. "It were an infamy if I permitted you to misjudge Radetzky. He is an honest, open-hearted gentleman. His only thought was that he could do a grand thing for you, and find you an opening to success upon the stage of Vienna, where his uncle, the great general, is in high favor with both court and emperor."

"But you refused?" she gasps, a wistful look coming into her face, as she steals a glance at her dictator, whose sternness sometimes gives her despair, whose

kindness at others seems to make her radiant.

"Refused? Of course I did!" he answers, an awakening passion making his face gleam. "Thou art my most valued possession! I yield thee to no man!"

There is a love-light in his eyes, but she sees it not,

for she mutters, hoarsely: "Mon Dieu! You regard me as PROPERTY!" And, clinching her little white fists in impotent protest, this lady, who by cruel fate, has been legally compelled to strip herself of title, name, and station, and decree herself to childish government at the hands of a taskmaster, rushes to her little chamber, and bursts into a torrent of despairing tears.

Carlo is about to follow her, but there is a rap at the parlor door. He steps hastily to it, and a servant, entering, announces: "A gentleman asks to see you."

A sudden determination flashes in the Italian's face. He says, hastily: "I expect him! Never mind his name. Show him up to me at once!"

Some hours after this, tossing in her sleep, Estelle awakens. A ray of light under the door of her room comes in from the neighboring apartment. For a moment she can not remember where she is. Then Da Messina's voice from the adjoining parlor smites her with recollection. Tears come again into her eyes. She shudders: "His bound-girl! Bid for as one! Valued as one!"

But here a more imminent terror masters her. Two men are talking excitedly in the parlor. She catches the words: "Police—in hiding—at the frontier."

The horror of the pursued flies through her veins. She thinks, affrightedly: "Can it be that some officer is accusing him of shielding me?" In a moment she has slipped from her bed, her white, dimpled feet, in their nude beauty, making no sound upon the floor. She glides to the entrance, and, opening the door very slightly, looks anxiously out.

Astonishment comes to her. A man, dressed in the rough frieze of a traveling salesman, is exhibiting a rifle, or musket, and speaking with English accent and trade directness.

A heavy curtain has been drawn over the parlor door leading to the outside corridor, but to Estelle, standing scarce ten feet away, the man's voice, though

low, is quite distinct.

"These," he says, "have the latest improvements, Signore. Their range is fifty yards more than the

guns of the blooming Austrian infantry."

"Yes, I know that," answers Da Messina. "I investigated this arm in Paris, and also again at your office here. And you say that ten thousand of these can be delivered?"

"Yes," replies the man, "I can guarantee ten thousand, or even fifteen thousand, with sufficient ammunition, at the price named."

"It is a heavy one," mutters il cavaliere.

"Ah! But Italian liberty, my dear sir, is worth the price," whispers the vender, who is apparently an agent for some English arms manufacturing company.

"Yes," replies Carlo, "the liberty of my country is worthy of anything! But be sure these weapons are in time. As it is, the Austrian government has requisitioned even every fowling-piece in Lombardy. If we fight now, we only have the weapons of despair—cobblestones and stilettos. But the night is late. I have had no sleep, practically, for two days. Come to me to-morrow morning at seven o'clock, with your contracts. Understand me? These must be delivered by the 14th of March to the appointed parties at Genoa. They must be all wrapped in hay, so that they may be conveyed across the Lombardian frontier in farmers' wagons."

"By the 14th?" remarks the agent, dubiously. "I can catch the direct steamer from Marseilles to Malta on the 5th. Five days—the 10th—a fast steamer. I'll have them at Genoa by the 15th, at the latest. You see, we could never do this in such quick time, but we happen to have the arms already on board a steamer at Malta. They were intended for the Albanians; but they've run short of funds. By the 15th—I'll do it! It's ten thousand your committee wanted, with one

hundred cartridges per gun-at the price named, if

payment is secured."

"That shall be ready for you on delivery of the arms in Genoa; drafts of the Messrs, Gibbs, accepted by Coutts Brothers, London,"

"God bless my soul," ejaculates the man of commerce, "that's the same as gold coin!"

"It is the gold and silver plate of many Italian noble families that has gone into the melting-pot to give us the sinews of war," remarks Da Messina, sadly. Then he writes, hurriedly, and, handing the slip of paper to his visitor, says: "Here are the names of the parties who will receive the goods and pay you for them, and also the Sardinian officers of customs, who will pass your invoice of hay bales, without examination, at Genoa. But you must deliver them not later than the 15th! Then they can be at Tortone on the 17th, and our hay wagons cross the frontier, so that—" He checks himself, and mutters: "O Gran Dio! Is the time so near to strike?"

"By Heaven!" cries the arms agent, enthusiastically; "I'll have 'em delivered on time, if I have to blow the boilers out of our steamer to do it. You can believe me, I'll attend to this matter personally, on the

honor of a business man."

"Yes, I believe in British business faith, or I should not have dared to so unbosom myself to you as this matter has compelled me," answers the Italian. "And now good night, Englishman. You may thank God that you are free, though you manufacturers make freedom a pretty high article to struggling patriots."

"Struggling patriots are generally pretty uncertain pay!" laughs the other. Then he says, with English brusqueness: "But, for such bills as you state, which are cash, thirty per cent. off! How is that for a

close-fisted British lover of liberty?"

"Diavolo! I thank you," whispers the other, and clasps the hand of the man of commerce, eagerly and gratefully.

"But, besides," remarks his visitor, "in addition I must request—"

"What new demand?" sneers Carlo, savagely.

"That you sing me one song. I have never yet heard Pergolese, and I love music."

"Corpo di Baccho! I will sing you half a dozen, generous Englishman!" cries the tenor, excitedly. "With this discount, twelve thousand muskets, instead of the ten thousand, and two hundred rounds of ammunition a gun! God bless you!" and he wrings the hand of the British manufacturer.

A moment later, Adrienne glides back to her cot. Lying there, she murmurs: "As I suspected, an Italian patriot! In Milan, under the Austrian rule, youmy dictator—a secret conspirator, taking up arms! Grâce à Dieu! I will have such a hold upon you as poor bound-girl never had before upon Italian padrone!"

For one moment, she laughs jeeringly; then gasps: "Oh, God, forgive me! His touch thrills me, his voice enchants me!" as she listens to Pergolese singing, with all a noble soul, the weapons of liberty out of the hardheaded British tradesman.

While, in the corridor outside, gliding with slippered feet, is Parogue, garbed as a waiter, the most adroit mouchard of old Vidocq. He is meditating: "Tonnerre de Dieu! This fellow is assuredly a great artist, but is that shrinking thing in there his bound-girl, to be taken to Italy and beaten into a stage-girl to fill his purse? Or is she our naughty Madame la Baronne, slipping out of France, and this singer, her lover, aiding her escape? Ventre bleu! Ladies of title have loved tenors before this."

Then the grandeur of the song floating out to him touches his artistic, old soul, and makes him applaud beneath his breath; and he mutters: "Diable! That chap rivals that fellow Rubini, who, ten years ago, at Des Italiennes, set Paris crazy!"

CHAPTER X.

THE PURSUING SHADOW.

Da Messina, who has finished some very early business with the English arms dealer, is rising from his breakfast, his hostess wishing him bon voyage.

"Estelle?" he queries, in hurried anxiety, looking at

his watch. "She should be here."

"Cospetto!" replies La Brisco, angrily. "When I awakened mademoiselle this morning, as you directed, she was sulky; said she didn't want to go to Italy. So I said to her: 'Oho! What you want, my lazy one, is a little of thy padrone's stick!"

"Morbleu, you must have frightened the poor child to death!" ejaculates Carlo, distress upon his face.

"I did not," dissents La Brisco, dryly. "The poor child grew like a tigress, shook her rebellious, little fist at me, and called me a harridan. But I have a way with girls," she continues. "I cheered mademoiselle up by telling her she would be great some day; that already she had charmed our new waiter, who, having caught her voice at her exercises, has been asking all the questions in the world about the beautiful songstress. Then pride made our song-bird very lively. She bustled about at a great rate, I can tell you. Her trunk is packed, and she is all ready for the journey. But in Italy you'll have to tame her!"
"Hush!" mutters il cavaliere, hastily, "she's com-

ing!" as his apprentice joins him.

Though Estelle looks very innocent in her little, brown dress, there is a latent mutiny in her bright eyes, and her nose is altogether too haughty for a bound-girl.

She is about to take a seat at the table in a languid, debonair, supercilious way, when La Brisco cries, sharply: "Where are your manners, child?"

And, perchance being moved to her action by a glint in Da Messina's eyes, Madame la Baronne makes a scant courtesy, but contradicts the salute by a very

savage "Good morning, mio padrone!"

"Good morning, Estelle!" he answers, quickly; and, apparently not wishing discussion, says: "Your breakfast will be brought to you. I have finished mine, and must attend to my packing, and settling madame's bill." With this, he goes hastily into his room, a very troubled look upon his face, while La Brisco, stepping out also, looks at his haughty apprentice, shrugs her plump shoulders, and thinks, grimly: "I pity Miss Termagant's poor padrone. Diavolo! He hasn't strength enough to conquer the waywardness of this child, who is kicking her surly feet about under the table."

Estelle is still in a haughty mood when the art-loving waiter of the Hotel Tarascon trips lightly in, his slippered feet scarce sounding on the floor, and arranges

deftly the breakfast of the bound-girl.

Scarce heeding him, this young lady seems to be regarding bitterly a very short skirt which displays a pair of pretty feet in stout, high-laced French bottines, provided by the common-sense of La Brisco. As he places the omelet before her, she stamps a little foot in impotent rage.

But he simply waits upon her, though every movement of the graceful creature is under his sharp eye. She finishes a half-eaten breakfast, and he says, politely: "Mademoiselle, might I trouble you to sign the

check," and places her account before her.

In listless manner, Estelle has produced her little purse, and placed a silver franc upon the table. She is drawing off a glove for her little hand to write a name that would probably betray her, when there darts from the chamber of her master a man, with savage eye and hasty mien, who says, sternly: "Squandering my money, you brat! The six francs I let you put in your pocket to show people that I was not a miser!" Then he cries to the waiter: "I pay my own bills; take that to the office, and, that you may see that I am not a stingy Italian, here are five centimes for thy pour boire.

Off with you! Estelle, get your cloak on at once!" His manner is so ferocious that the waiter disappears without another word, leaving the girl gazing in speechless horror upon this cruel man who rules her.

But she has scarce time for fear! After a hasty glance at the entrance, to be sure that the waiter is truly gone, this man of strange moods slams the door to; then, flying to his affrighted charge, he tenderly takes her in his strong arms, and, lifting her up, shudders: "God forgive me! I have frightened you! That was the waiter whom I fear—the one who was so curious about your actions. Your movement was that of a lady accustomed to paying her own bills at restaurants. That franc—the fee a countess might give for that little breakfast! What may he not suspect? What may he not think?" Then a change comes into his voice; he says, commandingly: "From now on, no more mutiny. Your servitude is your safety in France. Don't torture me by making me feel I am a brute to you, even if I seem cruel. You have common-sense enough to know the reason of a harshness that drives me distracted whenever your eyes have anguish in them. I fear this man will follow me. No words, no actions, no looks must betray that you are anything but my bound-girl; that I am aught but thy padrone, who will coin thy talents into money, and beat thee if thou art rebellious. Now, this is my last apology to thee." Holding her before him, there is a pleading in his twitching face. She utters a faint, bashful cry; it seems as if he would kiss her lips, but he only presses a burning salute upon her little hands, twice, very tenderly.

"Ah, now that you are kind to me, I am not afraid

of you!" she says, in pretty pathos.

Then his demeanor astounds her more. "Now I should frighten you!" he mutters, hoarsely, and gazes at her with greedy eyes; then, in loud tones, cries: "Go, get on your wraps! Quick! Be ready, girl, to take the boat within five minutes."

So it comes to pass that Estelle, looking exceedingly

pretty and very shy, is brought down by the cavaliere

to a waiting carriage.

Their hostess comes out to say a last adieu to Pergolese. She babbles effusively: "Don't let my friends in Italy forget their old favorite that they used to call *la bell*" Annina. By the bye," she adds, "that waiter, who loves art, was so frightened by your brusqueness, Signore, when he carried up Estelle's breakfast, that he's left the hotel without his wages!" and wonders what makes Carlo and his ward look so disquieted as they drive away hastily to the boat that takes them to Avignon, from whence they will journey by diligence, and partly completed railway, to Marseilles.

And they have cause to fear, for, after them, all this day, as they voyage together on the deck of the steamer or journey in the diligence in the evening that carries them to Arles, or in the train that bears them into Marseilles, even in the darkness of the great tunnel enter-

ing that town, is a pursuing shadow.

Jacques Parogue, Vidocq's oldest and slyest mouchard, inspired by ten thousand francs' reward, has thought it well to bring a naughty little aristocrate back to justice.

"Madame la Baronne de Portalis is to be looked for."
"Madame la Baronne de Portalis has disappeared,

having no passport."

"Adele Pichoir is dead, but Adele Pichoir's passport has been used by a woman going to Montereau."

To that place he has flown, but has been halted by the discovery that the same evening after the arrival of the boat a lady and gentleman, on horseback, left, going toward Montargis. This clew he has, however, found to be a false one.

He has heard of a man and a woman journeying by post to Troyes upon a single passport, stating that the man is an Italian padrone, the girl his apprentice.

To Troyes he has gone, but has found no trace of the passport of Adele Pichoir; the reports he hears of the Italian singer, with a modest and retiring girl of about sixteen, make him almost hopeless. Then he catches a rumor that Madame la Baronne and her paramour lover, by the aid of friends, engaged a private carriage in Montereau for Orleans. It is too late to follow them that way. If they go toward the Mediterranean, they are quite certain to come to Lyons; there he will head them off.

So, twelve hours after Da Messina, on Sunday morning, Parogue had put his acute, old phiz into that town; but, finding naught of a lady coming from Orleans, and time being heavy upon his hands, the old detective, who is an industrious fellow, though he has as yet little suspicion in that direction, thinks he may as well discover what he can about the Italian singer and the girl he has under his charge.

Consequently, inquiring among people connected with stage and opera, he chances to stumble upon the ex-wardrobe mistress of the Naples theater.

"Oh, I know Pergolese very well!" replies the woman. "He came on the boat with me from Chalons. Italy thinks him a great tenor, and I think him a very kind-hearted fellow; for here's a very curious state of things—he has an apprentice who loves her padrone."

"Diable! Loves him? What makes you think that?"

"Well, he jumped overboard from a Saone boat to save a fool of an Austrian, and his bound-girl wept for him as if her heart would break. What made me notice it was the little stage trollop's using a handkerchief as dainty as any fine lady's. Ma foi! It had a coronet stamped in its corner! There's cheek for a chorus girl."

"Humph! Perhaps it was because Pergolese has a small Italian title," remarks the mouchard, but goes away hastily, and this coroneted handkerchief, with some small things he notices, as, two hours after, he gazes upon the Italian and his charge on the hill Des Fourvieres, make him sufficiently interested in Da Messina's protégée to take the post of extra waiter at the

crowded Hotel Tarascon. Here enough suspicions come to him to make him go further, though he notices the girl is strictly governed and kept well to her work. He is also acquainted with the visit of the British arms manufacturer in the dead of night to the room of the Italian; for very little escapes his red, ferret eyes.

So it chances that an old revolutionary officer comes on the boat shortly after Da Messina and his charge at Lyons. He has grizzled hair, well-trimmed and tight-twisted, waxed mustachioes, an empty sleeve for the left arm, "lost at Waterloo when I was one of Kellermann's cuirassiers," he states to some inquiring passengers. In a quiet way he smokes a pipe constantly, and his bright eyes at times twinkle as he notices how Estelle is embarrassed by her short skirts, which, the day being windy, give many piquant views of exquisitely graceful, yet extremely well-developed limbs for her tender age.

The object of his solicitude has dainty manners, this old officer remarks, and at her lunch in the little salon eats like an aristocrat. She has a curious, timid manner of hitching down the skirt of her dress. This, however, is common enough in growing girls, though these do it defiantly, as if to assert a greater maturity

than belongs to them.

To contradict this, mademoiselle is apparently strictly governed. Her guardian seems to always keep his eye upon her. Even on the deck of the steamboat, slightly apart from the throng of passengers, she is required to stand before her padrone, as he, seated in lazy comfort, hears her recite her lesson in Italian.

Some little time after this, mademoiselle, having been led to one of the few dingy cabins of the boat, which has, apparently, been engaged by her governor, and left by herself—for the tenor is smoking a cigar at the bow of the boat—the old officer contrives, while passing this stateroom, to stumble, and in that stumble tries the door, and finds that it is locked.

"Ventre bleu!" he mutters. "Mademoiselle has

been naughty, and is locked up. That would not happen to a baroness under the escort of her lover." In this he deceives himself, however, as Estelle, for her own privacy, has fastened the door upon herself.

This discovery has such an effect upon the old gendarme that he thinks it hardly worth while to travel farther, and has already made up his mind to desert the boat when it reaches Valence; but before this, one or two little things occur to again arouse his suspicions and make him journey on.

The girl, apparently released from her confinement, has been brought upon deck by her guardian, who is showing her some of the famous ruined castles upon the right bank of the river. Such attention from a padrone is suspicious. Besides, the deck being quite slippery from some leaves of vegetables brought on at St. Vallier, she nearly falls, but is caught up, and carried to a neighboring chair with such consideration that the mouchard is astounded. Then a grim smile ripples his face, for he sees that the arm that supports the slender waist is pressing it with a lover's tender ardor.

"Parbleu!" he communes with himself. "He may be her padrone, but this man also loves this girl. At Marseilles I shall have some certain proof whether this pretty, shrinking thing is my naughty, little Baronne

or no."

So, after a time, as the boat is approaching Montelimart, just before dusk, he steps up to Estelle, who is for the moment alone upon the deck, and, with the prerogative of extreme age, says: "You seem to be interested in the sights of the Rhone, Mademoiselle. Would you like to hear the tale of an old soldier about that tumble-down castle upon yonder hill? Fifty years ago it was a military prison. When I was a lieutenant, after the Italian war, we had two thousand Austrian prisoners there, and I commanded a guard of but twenty men — we needed the rest in Italy, Egypt, and——"

"I beg you, Monsieur, I am not permitted to talk

to gentlemen," falters the addressed one, with a start of consternation.

"Pish! I am too old to hurt you, my timid butterfly!" he guffaws.

"But—but, sir, my padrone! He is so stern with me!"

She raises her hand pathetically, as Da Messina is striding toward them.

"Ah, then I'll not get thee into trouble," growls the old fighter, who seems to be quite well pleased, as he withdraws, for upon the wedding finger of his suspect's white hand is a slight, red mark, where a ring had rested once.

"Morbleu," he thinks, "Madame la Baronne is a widow!" then mutters: "Peste! Her face is too innocent! She could not have done the crimes of which they accuse La Portalis." But after a moment his mind changes, and he cogitates: "I have read, though, that Brinvillers had the face of an angel, yet history says she poisoned half a regiment. Tonnerre de Dieu! If I had but a daguerreotype! These sun pictures are not very good, but they will have better some day, and then, when railroads are built all over France, and this new, great thief-catcher, the electric telegraph, of which we have had a little taste between Paris and Calais, is sending messages in no time everywhere—there is a bad time coming for flying criminals."

So, the old campaigner smokes his pipe contentedly, as the boat, a few hours after, runs up to the landing at Avignon. From that point he follows his engaging suspect by diligence and train until, at about eleven o'clock this night, she and her guardian reach the great commercial city of Marseilles, that lies beside the blue waters of the Mediterraneau.

All this time, to the appealing eyes of his ward, Da Messina seems to be getting more anxious. Estelle has already told him of the old Napoleon campaigner's advances to her. At Avignon, Carlo has cast some piercing glances at this man, and what he sees is by no

means satisfactory. Later, at Marseilles, as the crowd jostle each other in what was at that time the little railway station, the Italian appears to be pushed against the old warrior, brushing quite heavily upon the veteran's empty sleeve. From this moment, Pergolese, to his bound-girl, seems to be frenzied. He goes out of the station and cries loudly in far-reaching tones: "A hack for the Hotel de Naples! Quick! For the Naples in a hurry! Double pour boire to the man who drives fast!"

Of course, half a dozen hackmen fight for this generous fare. This delays him a minute. But, selecting one rather deliberately, in curious contrast to his rapid tones, he hurries his charge to the little Italian hotel called the Naples, near the Old Port, on the Rue Beauveau.

As they drive along the street, looking through the rear window of the coupé, Estelle whispers: "Misericorde! He is following us!"

"In another hack? Bravo! That's what I wanted

him to do!" returns Carlo, vindictively.

As they alight at the hotel, Estelle notices that the place, which is very convenient for passengers on the Mediterranean boats, it being close to the Old Port, in which the steamers docked,* seems to be frequented by a goodly portion of the Italian colony of this great French seaport. The Naples is also just large enough to give privacy.

At her governor's hasty direction, they are immediately shown up to their rooms, on the third floor, three *en suite*—parlor and two bedrooms opening off. The passages leading to their apartments in the darkness of almost midnight are quite deserted. Da Messina, who seems to know the place, has selected a quiet portion of the house.

Instead of ordering supper, the moment he and Estelle are alone, he says: "Take off your jacket, girl!

^{*} The grand new docks upon the Quai de la Joliette were not open to commerce till 1850.—ED,

Unbind your hair, and toss it, disheveled, over your shoulders!" He presses his hand to his brow, and his eyes become agonized. "You will forgive me?" he begs. "You must forgive me for this!"

"Oh, Heaven! What do you mean to do?"

"The only thing that now, I think, can save you."
He goes hastily out of the room, as Estelle, whose fingers tremble as she does his bidding, tosses off her jacket and unbinds her hair. In a dazed kind of way she notes that Carlo's steps are very quiet. He stands at the head of the stairway coming up to the little corridor which touches the entrance of their parlor. After

door hastily, and flies to her.

She gasps in affright, and buries her blushing face in her hands, for he has torn with rapid pluck the

very short waiting, he glides into the room, closes the

slight, brown frock from off her shoulders.

"Now," he whispers, "for your life, moan as if I were torturing you! Beg me for mercy! Sigh and scream, but not to alarm the house! That's it—that's it!" Then, a kind of frenzy coming into his eyes, he mutters: "Pardon me, for the love of God!" and slaps, quite sharply, her delicate shoulders of gleaming ivory until they are as red as fire; then flies to the portal.

And she, obeying him, in a frightened, half-distracted way, moans, and begs, and pleads, as if she were a bound-girl being scourged; while he, with quick movement, pulls open the door, seizes a one-armed man who, apparently, has been listening to the

girl's screams, and drags him, struggling, in.

"Basta!" he laughs, jeeringly, to the fighting fellow. "You've bound up one arm to trick me, Austrian spy! Now I bind up the other!" And, with a scarf torn from his waist, he ties the man, who struggles impotently with a single hand against the fury of a strong, young, active, and desperate antagonist.

Then, bound and helpless, and tossed into a chair, old Jacques Parogue curses his deft disguise that has

given him but a one-arm power to fight like a wildcat for his life; for a long, gleaming razor-edge stiletto is at his throat, and this wild-eyed Italian is snarling: "Ha, ha! Spy of the Hapsburgs, disguised as the old soldier of the revolution! So you have come once more to attempt to trick the secret of 'Young Italy' out of this fool girl, who chattered to thee on the Lyons boat! Dost wish to get her beaten again? But thy tongue will now be very still!"

The upraised knife tells this old fellow, who has been in many a ticklish place before, that if he opens his mouth to cry for help, his first shriek will be his last.

Therefore, he says, shivering a little before the gleaming blade: "I am no damned Austrian! No old soldier of France loves them!"

"Basta! Not love them, but their money! Austrian gold is clinking in thy pocket! Otherwise, why did you lurk outside my chamber in the Lyons hotel, when I had interview with the English arms manufacturer? Santo Gennaro, don't lie to me, with shaking head, when you should be praying for thy soul! Remember, I caught you listening in the corridor, and you pretended 'twas because thou lov'st the voice of Pergolese."

"Tonnerre de Dieu! You recognize me?" snarls the accused.

"And why not? A member of the old Carbonari is cunning at detecting the agents of Austria. You are the waiter who loved art last night at Lyons, and to-day became the old republican officer. You must be an Austrian spy; otherwise, why did you follow me—an Italian, anxious only for the good of his country? Peste! I can not believe thee!"

The dagger is raised on high, as if it would be driven straight into the bound man's heart.

But he mutters, frantically: "Nom de Dieu! Hold thy hand, and I'll tell you why! I am an officer of police in search of a criminal."

"A criminal? Oho! You make me laugh!"

"I have a warrant to arrest Madame la Baronne de Portalis. You can find the paper in my pocket."

"Yes, it is here," remarks Carlo, hastily, holding up a document that makes his bound-girl shiver and cower farther from him, as though she feared her stern master.

"Madame la Baronne is accused of forging her dead husband's name to his will," goes on the mouchard, eager to convince. "It is also whispered that she put arsenic in the old gentleman's tea, like that petite diablesse Lafarge. Likewise it is known that she is young and beautiful, and is escaping from France with one of her lovers. Pardon me, Monsieur, I thought you might be the lover, and that "-he glances toward the shrinking girl, who has shuddered to a corner-" might be Madame la Baronne de Portalis,"

"That Madame la Baronne de Portalis!" guffaws the Italian, and, seizing Estelle by her wrist, he swings her round, crying: "Show Monsieur your red shoulders!" and jeers: "Madame la Baronne has been well beaten on your account, Monsieur! I do not permit Madame la Baronne to speak to anyone."

"Bound as I am," mutters the revolutionary officer, "I tell you, it is a dastard thing to beat a poor girl."

"Not when she disobeys strict orders. For, being with me, she might betray my secrets, which are the secrets of Italian liberty."

At this, Estelle almost destroys herself, for she begs wildly: "Don't tell him more! For the love of Heaven,

don't compromise yourself!"

"Shut thy fool mouth!" scoffs Carlo, in desperate voice. "Cospetto! To thy room, Madame la Baronne, and get thy dress off for the scourging I shall give you for making all this trouble!"

Seizing her delicate arm in apparent savage clasp, he pushes her into her little chamber, slams the door upon

her, and, locking it, puts the key in his pocket.

To the old mouchard, bound and helpless, this Italian seems an ogre to this poor, beaten child, as he comes back and seats himself calmly before his captive. Lighting a cigar, he observes, easily: "I have no objection to your knowing an Italian conspirator. Monsieur, because vou dare not betrav one. You may be a great policeman, my friend, but you are not a very good politician, or you would be aware that, since France is a republic, Austria, the ally of the dethroned Louis Philippe, is now considered the enemy of France; that the heads of your government are now the friends of 'Young Italy'; that our revolution in Lombardy and Venice, which has only been waiting for the cry, "France is free!" is now their pet political nursling! Learn by these letters from Odilon Barrot, Cremieux. and Carnot, that, if I say the word, your official head yes, and old Vidocq's, too-may drop." He hurriedly produces some letters that bear names that make the old gendarme roll his eyes in a groggy way.

"There is a greater reason why your secret is safe with me," he says, doggedly: "I have fought the Austrians too often under le Petit Corporal not to hate them. Tonnerre de Dieu! I would like to be with you on the plains of the Adige. Sacré bleu! I was a drummer-boy then, but I have not forgotten the bridge of

Lodi."

Something in the man's spirit strikes a spark from the Italian's eye. "Forgive me, friend of Italy. I'll meet them in your place within the month," he whispers. "But here"—he is untying the man now—"here is a gift, not to keep your tongue silent, but because thou art a friend." He puts a handful of gold in the old detective's hands, adding: "Drink the health of Italy with that, and make your comrades the friends of free Lombardy!" And so, going to the door with him, to be very sure the officer really takes departure, Da Messina bows out a friend who had come in as an enemy.

So the detective, who, in his way, is a philosopher, strolls down the stairs into the coffee-room of the Naples, muttering: "Lover of liberty! Yes, Italian

liberty, but not the liberty of that poor devil of an apprentice he is taking to Italy to make a slave. Nom de Dieu, this is a curious world! Parbleu, but his hand is liberal! If I can do this fellow, who sings like an angel, a good turn here, Sac à papier! I am at his elbow."

But old Parogue would think this a more curious world could he look into the parlor, from which he has just emerged, and see the bound-girl wringing her hands, and crying: "Why did you take this risk upon your life to save me? Here, almost at the Italian frontier, this man may be an Austrian spy. In trying to take suspicion from me, you have revealed such things that, if they come to the ears of Austria, it means your death!"

"Santa Maria! You know?"

"Oh, I know more than you think! I heard you bargain last night with the English manufacturer of arms. They are to be concealed in hay; they are to be delivered in Genoa by the 15th; they are to cross the frontier near Tortone!"

At this revelation the conspirator starts back, and stammers: "Grand Dio, you know the secret of Milan!" Then his face, that has been pale, grows red, and his eyes appalling.

"Yes, but I will never betray you. I swear it! By the Mother of God, I swear it!" she cries; then, a curious intensity coming into her voice, she asks again: "Why — why did you take this risk for me — a fugitive?"

"Why?" For ten seconds Da Messina hesitates; then her disheveled beauty, as she half crouches at his feet, overcomes him; his face becomes soft with tender passion; he mutters, hoarsely: "Why? Diavolo, because I love thee, little one!" And, the tide of a mighty emotion breaking down its floodgates, he pulls her to his heart; but almost as suddenly puts her from him, and shudders: "It is an infamy to tell you this, when you are helpless in my hands."

"Misericorde! You tell me this tale of love because

you fear I will betray your cause!" she gasps.

"No, no! You shall not think me dastard enough for that!" Then, seizing her again, he looks straight into her blushing face, and whispers: "I love thee, little one; I love thee!"

And she, her eyes flaming with a new light—for this widow of an old husband has never loved before—twines her soft arms about his neck, and, clinging to him, murmurs: "Thou hast said it! I am thine, not by the papers of my bondage, but by my love for thee, my ruler, yet my protector!"

"You forgive me?"

"Yes! Take thy right, my master!" and she holds up to him a pair of delicate, arched lips, red as sea coral, and moist as sea foam, with the first passion of her heart.

Then, for the first time in her life, this widow knows

what the kiss of a strong man means!

It thrills her, it charms her, yet it conquers her. She feels that she is no more her own, but belongs to these great arms that clasp her with such latent power. She knows she is to be ruled, yet also to be fondled, caressed, and supported; and before her open all the de-

lights of a woman's first love.

The little room, with its dim lamplight and dingy furniture, becomes to her paradise, for it holds this handsome, dark-eyed, curly-haired fellow, whose touch thrills her with a new and strange rapture, as he seats himself and draws her, like a child, upon his knee, where she sits, perched, dangling her little feet about in air, and clinging to him as if he were the Rock of Ages.

"Thank God!" he whispers. "You pardon my apparent harshness," and his lips offer sweet apology, as he kisses the ivory shoulders until they blush red again; then remarks, determinedly: "But I swore that no

one should drag you from me."

"Ah!" she murmurs, archly. "That proves you

love me for myself; you saved me because I was

precious to you."

"In addition, it was necessary to so arrange the affair that no suspicion would follow you to give you trouble in Italy," he remarks, in cautious tone. "When there, after a little time I shall tear up thy papers of indenture, and shall come to thee, an unfettered woman, to ask the gift of thy life."

"You—you are going to put me from you?" she falters. Her eyes fill with tears, and she pouts: "Now

you are unkind!"

"Sapristi! Last night, little one, I said I would hold you, and you burst into tears," he laughs. "To-night I say you shall be free, and I am told I am unkind again. Peste! Will nothing please thee?"

"Only that you keep me thy own forever!" And she puts up her lips that are so clinging, so enticing, that, for his own sake and hers, Da Messina, after one moment's rapture, holds her from him, and whispers: "I have to meet some friends of Italy to-night."

"Mon Dieu, you will put new danger upon the life

I love! You shall not go!"

"I must!" And, as if he feared the magic of her arms, he carries her to her little chamber. Despite caresses, he puts Estelle in, locks the door upon her, and, standing in the parlor, tosses the key over the transom to her, and says: "Thy safety, little one, from an infamous padrone!"

But she, unlocking the door, steps out, and holds the key tremblingly to him, whispering, a great faith in her eyes: "Keep it. I trust thee! Have I not been under thy hand, helpless, for six days and nights? Why should I believe less in the honor of the man I love

than in the honor of the man I feared?"

Putting the key to his lips, he whispers: "Mia carissima alma, I thank thee!" then salutes her hand with the stately grace of an old-time cavalier, and so leaves the apartment.

BOOK III

THE TOUCH OF LOVE

CHAPTER XI.

THE HAND OF BOLZA.

They are to take breakfast together in the little parlor of their suite at the Naples, for Da Messina thinks it prudent that his apprentice be not seen in public this morning. Estelle's appearance would be too joyous for the beaten serf that some in this hotel may think her, either from the babbling of the old officer de sûreté, or from her plaintive cries to dupe that mouchard.

So, the waiter, having placed the meal upon the table and disappeared, and the door being locked, Carlo's sweetheart flutters out to him, and, with a demure courtesy, whispers: "Good morning, mio padrone!" then tenders two sweet lips for his pleasure, as he sees before him what would be a fairy, did not her radiant face have traces of earth's grandest passion.

Wishing to charm the eye she loves, Estelle is in a plain, white negligée, a relic of the convent. Fearful of bringing suspicion upon her Italian patriot, for it is not her own safety of which she now thinks most, his apprentice has made the cambric robe de chambre as juvenile as her previous frocks. Its very childishness gives it a naïve abandon that adds to its charm. Its soft veils reveal snowy neck and rounded arms. Fastened only at the waist by a broad, white ribbon, its skirt floats off on either side bouffantly, after the fashion of that day, to permit a shorter petticoat, to

display exquisite limbs, very tightly hosed in silk, and

slippered most attractively in bronze.

"Now," she says, archly, after she has received a good-morning kiss, "thou hast done so much for me, let me wait upon thee. 'Tis a bound-girl's duty."

But he, with strong arms, putting her in a chair, insists upon attending to her wants. He says deferentially: "In strict privacy, Mademoiselle, you must let me apologize by my courtesy for the harshness which I may be compelled to assume toward you be-

fore the public eye."

"I have been thinking, dear one," she whispers, "of my duty to thee in the strange relations that have come upon us. As we near the rule of Austria, the shadow which is rising from me is deepening over thy head—the head I love. The safety of your life is partly in my hands. No severity from you, to prove to your tyrants that I am the apprentice you went to France to gain, shall make me do aught but love you more, because it will protect the life I love. Treat me as thy bound-girl until Italy is free."

"And then," he whispers, taking her tenderly in his

arms, "then I shall give you a happier title."

"Yes, but until that time"—she looks archly at him—"dost think I'll make a pretty child?" And, breakfast being over, she brings him the Italian grammar, and prays: "Teach me the language that I love, because it is the language of my lover."

"Sapristi! It is, mia cara, anima mia, bell' alma, mia carissima innamorata!" He has her in his arms. "Yes, 'tis the language of music, of art, of love! Let's hear

thy recitation."

"Yes, mio caro." She utters the Italian love term diffidently. "But please don't stand me in front of

you! I—I seem so far from you!"

After this suggestion, she is taken upon his knee, and, reciting her lesson in Italian very well, she pleads: "For it, I should have reward!"—and gets it!

Then, to his accompaniment, there being a piano in

the room, she sings the exercises she has practiced, and Pergolese knows he is listening to a woman who will become, in time, one of the famous artistes of this earth, for the only thing it lacked, a soul, has come into the *timbre* of her silver voice, to make it fervid with awakened love, that passion without which technique is trivial, effort is fruitless, and song is dead.

"How thy beautiful strains linger in my ear!" he whispers, patting her shoulder. "Some day, dear one, thou wilt make others cry, as thou dost me. And now!" He gives her a few more exercises, and hums to her some appoggiaturas, directing: "Sing these over many times. 'Twill make the time fly, for I have many important things to arrange in this town."

"Yes, yes! I know," she sighs.

"Besides, I must engage our passage upon Friday's boat for Genoa."

At this, a sudden joy ripples Estelle's face. "Friday's boat!" she cries. "And this is but Wednesday, in the early morning! Then there is time for me to get some better frocks than these two poor, cheap things La Brisco bought. They were good enough for thy bound-girl, but not for thy betrothed." Then she pleads: "Trust me; the new ones shall keep me just as juvenile as these. Please, mio padrone!" and begs him with all her woman's heart to give her a chance to look well in the eyes of him she loves.

A little cajolery procures the boon; Da Messina is disposed to grant her every indulgence compatible with their situation. So they stroll off together to modistes' and various other shops for feminine adornment.

Coming back from these, in their little parlor she puts her arms about his neck, and falters: "Fancy, if they had not called me a criminal, I would not now be in thy arms!"

"Sh—h! Not a word! Forget your past!" he commands, almost sternly, placing his finger upon her lips, and so leaves the room.

And she, looking after him, thinks: "O glorious

change! To-day all is bright; yesterday all was gloom, when I feared—O Heaven, I fear it still! If these French officials should drag me from my Carlo! But the people of the hotel must know the apprentice is at work."

Running nervously to the piano, she commences to ripple out the brilliant exercises that have been set for her. Her voice is so happy that it astounds an Italian lady, of scarce twenty-four years of age, yet looking hardly twenty-two, very beautiful, and fashionably gowned, and of distinguished manner, who cautiously approaches the door of the little apartment.

This lady, as she listens, thinks: "'Tis strange this beaten serf of an Italian padrone has a voice so

buoyant."

But, knocking at the door, and hearing "Entré!" she steps into the parlor, and sees a graceful girl, garbed as a child, spring up from the piano in astonishment at this unexpected intrusion. To Estelle this visitor says, pleasantly: "Excuse me, little one, I am the Contessa di Vilermo. Last night, poor child, I heard your sobs when you were chastised. I have come to offer my consolation, also my aid, against the severity of this Pergolese, who, though he is a grand singer, is to thee a great brute."

The answer she receives astounds this lady of many intrigues, much knowledge of the world, and an acuteness born of the devil and the instructions of il Conte Bolza, the astute head of the Austrian police in Lom-

bardy.

"Madame," says Estelle, blushing with humiliation, "my padrone does his duty by me, and is generally quite good to me, if I am good. But I trust you will not again bring his displeasure upon me, for I have a long lesson and many exercises to practice. I——"She glances at the door.

"Then continue your exercises before me," purrs the lady, sweetly. "I heard your lovely voice from the corridor. Let me remain and enjoy some more of it,"

and, apparently not thinking the assent of a bound-girl necessary, she sinks, languidly, into an easy-chair, and in pleasant entreaty urges: "Please go on! Don't let me interrupt you. I love music as well as you. The little that I heard outside causes me to think thou hast a voice of great future. Perchance his ambition for thy success makes Pergolese harsh to thee."

"Oh, he is goodness itself!" cries the girl; then, as if in contradiction to her words, murmurs: "When

I do my lessons well."

"Then, for Heaven's sake, don't let me disturb you, child! Go on and sing for me, and I will tell you

whether I think you will become a diva."

So, embarrassed by a kindness she scarce knows how to repulse, and thinking singing will, perhaps, keep her tongue from saying things best left unuttered, Estelle, who has gained confidence from the praise of a man she knows is a supreme judge of music, inspired by happiness, lifts up her voice, and sings her exercises and appoggiaturas.

As she closes, she finds two shapely arms clasped about her, and a very *spirituelle* face, with bright blue eyes, and eyebrows penciled like Diana's bow, looking over her shoulder, while two cunning lips whisper to her pretty ear the most pleasant words to which an aspirant for the stage can listen: "Darling, you will some day be famous!"

"Oh, you think so!" cries the girl, in ecstasy. "It is my hope in life that some day I shall sing with him. When he sings, I feel——" Estelle checks herself, but her eyes tell a curious tale to this lady of astute mind,

as she inspects the blushing face.

"You only need greater confidence; that will come by work. Under Pergolese's instructions, you will soon gain technique. Bravo, canary bird! I expect some day to throw my bouquet at thy feet at La Scala, or San Carlo, or perhaps even Des Italiennes, Paris." observes her critic, artfully making a step toward the trust of Estelle by that subtle influence that has ruined

more men and women than any other ruse since Eve

gave Adam the apple-flattery.

This patting on the back; this crafty saying, "You are great"; this worship—dearest of all things in this world to actress and prima donna—makes the young songstress look with cordial eyes upon her visitor.

"You-you think I will stand upon the boards with

him?" she gasps.

"Pardi! Why not, in a little time? Pergolese is engaged at La Scala; why should you not warble 'Lucia' to his 'Edgardo'? You'd sing the music of the mad scene as well as Sophie Olinska, who, it is said, owes half of her success to your maestro's suggestions."

"This O—Olinska!" stammers Estelle, her eyes bright with both curiosity and jealousy. She remembers Radetzky's words—"épris with the greatest tenor in Italy." These strike her heart; but the light babbling of this lady, who seems to be in confidential mood,

now tortures her.

"Yes, have you not heard of Pergolese's amour with Olinska? Two years ago 'twas the chatter of Milan and Venice. But thou art too much of a child to understand such things. Good-by! If you have need of friend, call upon Eugenia di Vilermo."

With the highest art, this lady of intrigue does not linger, after making her effect, and, with a kiss that, being permitted, tells her she has made the first step

toward intimacy, she takes her leave of Estelle.

In her own pretty parlor, but a few rooms away, Eugenia laughs: "This bound-girl loves her maestro. She'll get very close to this conspirator's state secrets, and I'll soon get very close to la petite Estelle. Besides, there was a jealous flash in her eyes. I'll be in the devil's luck if I can't report to the Conte Bolza what is the real business which has brought to France this Italian, who sings, but still conspires against the powers that be."

Then her face suddenly grows pallid. She sighs a

curious plaint: "The powers that be! I must report; this is my last chance! That accursed Signor Benuchio keeps one eye upon Italian conspirators, the other always upon me!" She wrings her delicate fingers, and says, resolutely: "Yes, I must go back; but I shall bring a present with me that will make Bolza pass a sponge over the name of Eugenia di Vilermo upon his delinquent slate. This bound-girl, who loves her stern padrone, shall play my cards for me. She has a jeal-ous heart."

The subtle Italian is right. In Da Messina's parlor the flash is still in Estelle's eyes. She has forgotten her music, and is clenching her hands, and muttering in broken voice: "Pergolese's amour with Olinska two years ago the babble of Milan and Venice!" then sobs, in feminine unreason: "I never loved before!"

Yet, a moment after, she comforts herself with: "But two years ago he did not know that I existed," and so, with better heart, begins again her vocal exercises. Just here, chancing to glance at her padrone's watch, that he has left, as before, to limit her exertions to a single continuous hour, her eyes light up.

Upon the inside of its heavy, golden cover is engraved: "Presented to Pergolese by Venezia." The triumph of the man she loves is her triumph! This magnificent timepiece is a present from a great Ital-

ian city.

Then, led by the devil, she searches for more inscriptions to the honor of Pergolese. In doing this, her agile fingers press the reverse side of the watch. Joy changes to misery, for the case, flying open, discloses a miniature of ivory, from out which a beautiful woman is gazing at her. She knows that this is her rival's portrait. The blue eyes tell of Hungary; the white robe of a Druid priestess and crown of mistletoe denote a prima donna in the character of "Norma." She glances at the passionate, yet lovely, face. She inspects the almost perfect symmetry of neck, arms,

and bust, that spring in snowy beauty from their light draping, and murmurs: "Too beautiful for me to fight against! In Milan, when he again sees her, he will forget his bound-girl!" Tears run down her delicate cheeks, and the delicate but passionate mouth whimpers.

A widow in her first love is generally a jealous fiancée, and, though Estelle tries to wipe away her tears,

red eyes greet Da Messina's return.

His quick glance perceives that she whom he left a rosebud has now become a lily.

"What has come to you, my own?" he questions,

anxiously, closing the door.

But she shakes her head, dreading to tell him of the visit she had received, for then she will be compelled to explain the cause of her tears.

"Has it aught to do with thy safety?"

" No."

"With mine?"

"No. Only, I—I am unhappy." Tears are still in the lovely eyes.

"Ah, thou hast been lonely, little one?"

" No."

"Then you must tell me." His tone is one she dares not disobey. She is opening her mouth to give him word of the contessa's visit; she is blushing with shame at the thought that she must confess that she is jealous of this man's love for another, when, by unhappy chance, the open watch meets his eye.

"Diavolo! Was it this?" he asks, shrugging his

shoulders and pointing to the beautiful miniature.

"Y-e-s."

"Oho! Thou hast been jealous of me?" A tinge of triumph is on his face.

"Yes. Thou didst not tell me thou hadst loved

before."

"Of course I did not, dear one! Why should I torture thy tender heart by the hundred past amourettes of a young tenor? I did not know there was such a charming, little lady in the world as thee until seven days ago—ah, what a wondrous week! All that I promise you is my love from now eternal! Didst I reproach thee because thou once hadst a husband? I only say to thee, thou art the first woman I ever asked to be my wife. Is not that proof enough I love thee?"

"Yes, but I wedded once, and did not love," she answers, archly, and is pleased to see that mention of

former husband shocks Pergolese strongly.

He replies, hoarsely: "Don't dare to speak to me of that man again! He is an agony to me! Forget

him! Forget thy past!"

The passion of her answer astounds him. "I have no past," she whispers, putting her arms about his neck; "I have lived only since I loved! La Baronne de Portalis is a myth. I am only thy bound-girl, Estelle Gabrielle Chartres. You are my master, stern or kind; as pleases you, so pleases me."

"Then let's understand each other at once and forever. This woman"—he pulls the beautiful miniature out of the watchcase and tosses it into the fire—" is naught to me; thy dead husband is naught to you. See that no other man save me enjoys the radiance of

your eyes, the sweetness of your lips."

His tone is so dominant, he holds her by her two delicate shoulders so potently, that she hangs her head, though Da Messina's jealousy makes Estelle wondrously content. A moment after, she becomes bright, laughing, joyous.

"Now that we are happy, little one," he laughs, "come with me to the dining-room. There we will have an early dinner; then do the town, and this even-

ing I will take you with me to the theater."

"Delightful!" she prattles. "Just wait until I am ready for promenade!" She trips away with joyous feet; but, reaching her little chamber, she halts at its portal, flashes her eyes at a piece of half-burnt ivory in the stove, and, as she runs away, throws him a most enthusiastic kiss.

"Santa Maria!" he mutters, noting Estelle's glance.

"How old intrigues that were pleasing in their time pall on man's palate when he really loves! *Per Baccho*, her bright face is worth all the Olinskas on this earth!" For Da Messina, like most other tenors, has had many passing amours; but, curiously, is now enduring his grand passion.

An hour after this, the loungers at the Hotel de Naples, who have eyes for celebrities, see the great Italian tenor, accompanied by a very bright-faced girl, in childish dress, stroll out upon the street. One or two of these, as he passes, remove their hats, and whisper: "For Italian art, grand Signore!" in their pleasant. Tuscan style.

This homage to the man of her heart gives rapture to Estelle. Her bright eyes now notice that people on the street turn and gaze after her maestro's handsome figure; for this Mediterranean town has many in it who have heard Pergolese sing at the great Italian opera houses, and remember, with pleasure, his dramatic art, the exquisite phrasing of his melodies, the noble passion of his glorious voice.

So it comes to pass that this day becomes an ecstasy to Estelle. After rambling about the shipping of the old port, they jaunt on a small, puffing steamboat to the Pharo fort. From here they stroll toward the Prado, the great promenade of Marseilles, and, engaging an open barouche, the weather being extremely fine, have a very pleasant excursion to the Mediterranean, where, looking over the blue waters of the sea, Estelle, in modest diffidence, whispers: "Carlo mio!"

At this, as reward for her effort in amorous Italian, her little hand is caressed under the carriage robe.

So, returning to the Naples, her face is radiant with the light of love. In the early evening they drive to the old theater, in the little cross street, near the Rue Mazagran, where, nestling almost behind her padrone, in the privacy of a *loge*, she looks upon that masterpiece of the French stage which the English call "The Marble Heart."

As the curtain falls on its wondrous prologue in old Athens, tears are in her eyes at the despair of the sculptor, flaunted by the statues to whom his love had given life.

"You like it, petite?" asks her maestro, during the entre-acte.

"O—oh! How I hate the cold-blooded statues!" she whispers so savagely that Da Messina laughs.

Then, the curtain going up again, noting her illumined face, he remarks: "You have the dramatic instinct." For in Estelle's charming features are reflected each varying emotion of this exquisite drama.

Gazing upon the stage, Da Messina's betrothed can not help thinking that she may be the "Marie," and Olinska the "Marco," of "The Marble Heart"; while this being, in whose strong hand her little one is nestled, may be—oh, horrors!—the fickle "Raphael," though a flash of fire in her veins tells her that she would never be a weeping thing like the crushed maiden of the play, but would give Olinska a grand battle for her lover.

Going home in the carriage, another rapture comes to her. Da Messina takes her in his arms, and patting her cheek approvingly, whispers: "You wept at the play! Your nation has many great actors; see that they inspire you! In opera, a woman who only sings is but half an artiste."

His caresses and his praise make her so joyous, that, after they have arrived at the hotel, as she runs up the stairs by his side to their apartment, the lights in the corridor being low, and the place retired, in the carelessness of happiness she cries, in enthusiastic voice: "Carlo mio, hasn't this been a glorious day!"

Da Messina's warning clutch upon her arm checks Estelle's outward exultation; but her words have reached a lady and a gentleman, who, from a darkened room, with door a very little open, have waited for the coming of the padrone and his apprentice.

As, with a bang, the door of Pergolese's parlor closes,

the portal of La Contessa di Vilermo's boudoir is also very cautiously shut, and its occupants, turning up the lights, begin a very curious conversation in low and cautious voices.

"Ghieu!" grins a swarthy browed, suave-speaking gentleman, in shining boots and elaborate evening dress. "Your beaten bound-girl seems not only very merry, but very intimate with her tyrant."

"That's what I can't make out, Signor Benuchio," answers la contessa. "Her cries came to me quite plainly, when mademoiselle was chastised last night."

"Corpo di Borgia! She loves the hand that smites her! I have known such things before, but I warn you for your own safety, mia cara Eugenia," whispers the man; "you must make a grand coup with this girl, so as to obtain the true knowledge why this tenor. who is known to be hand-in-glove with Cesaresco, Manin, Manara, and other so-called Italian patriots, has visited France. Did not I tell you that his passport read via Marseilles: that we were sure to meet him here? Discover if Da Messina came to this country to buy arms; if so, the routes by which they will be introduced into Lombardy. Remember, you failed the last time in Turin, because you were perverse and would not give your beauty to the Sardinian marquis. No scruples of any kind must mar this, thy last, effort, for Bolza will never pardon a second mistake. If you don't succeed now, his iron hand will be upon you. You know his grip is not a pleasant one."

At this suggestion, the lady shudders.

"By the bye," he continues; "I have a letter from him as to you. Here is your ticket. You will journey on the same boat with Pergolese to Genoa. You will contrive—I know your fascinating ways—to become one of his party. I shall keep my eye upon you here. At Genoa, you will report to Donetto, who will have you under his charge, until you cross the Lombardian frontier. There, of course, you will be safe again in the hands of your dear friend Bolza, who, to tell the

truth, has some slight fears that you may not wish, though you gave him your oath, to return to Milan. So I have instructions from him, in case you make any trouble, to speak to the French police, and you will be arrested at once for several commercial offenses, and returned to Austrian justice."

"Ah, but the French government is not now friendly to the Austrian!" she retorts, a flash of hope lighting

her eyes.

"Peste, yes! As a political criminal, you would be safe, mia bella; but as a commercial criminal, in this mart of trade, where the judge himself would doubtless be some banker's relative, a forged bill of exchange is very awful. You would be returned, my dear lady, to Austrian justice in a jiffy!" sneers Benuchio. Then, his face growing more sinister, he observes: "Besides, your husband, the chevalier d'industrie, who called himself 'count,' when he made you his widow, by immuring himself in the galleys for life, also left you a little son—Georgio by name, I think——"

"Gran Dio!" The woman is looking into his cold

face with desperate eves.

But he continues, contemplatively: "Now scarce two years old, at present in the school of Santo Patricio, Trieste. If you hope ever to see the urchin again, you must obey Bolza!"

"Yes, yes; I know!" she stammers, pressing her face with clasped hands, as if to shield from her eyes some cruel picture; then wiping them, as if they were moist with tears, though they are dry and burning.

"What a fatal weapon is a child, when directed at a

mother's heart!" he remarks, half laughingly.

But she, not heeding him, raises her head, and says brokenly: "Yes, I know I must do Bolza's bidding; then suddenly shudders: "How merciless he is!"

"To the enemies of his emperor, to the unfaithful—yes! But I think you can hardly complain of us," returns the man. "Do we not dress you up to your putative rank?" He glances at the *spirituelle* beauty of

the woman, whose very handsome neck, shoulders, and arms are displayed by a lovely evening robe, contrived quite deftly by a French modiste. "Do I not each day give you money sufficient for your wants as contessa, but not enough to run away with? In addition, guessing that Da Messina must return to Italy by Marseilles. I have procured this letter of introduction for you to the tenor. It is written by Mateo, the impresario of the San Carlo, who is not as good an Italian as Pergolese thinks him. It states that la Contessa di Vilermo prays escort to Lombardy, through which province she journeys, having an uncle living at Trieste. This frank mention of a very slight connection with his enemies, though it will place Pergolese on his guard, will also eliminate other more dangerous suspicions. But it is the girl from whom you must extract the knowledge that we wish. We have tried Pergolese before. He is adamant. Therefore, having your instructions, proceed to fulfill them. Madame! Beware how you fail the second time, my dear Eugenia!" The latent menace in his soft voice makes his lovely auditor tremble from the tips of her slight fingers to the toes of her dainty feet, as he continues: "If to succeed you have to give your soulgive it! It were better than that you endured the vengeance of Bolza!"

To this, she replying nothing, he adds: "Now, having spurred you, my esteemed lady, to great exertions for your own good, Benuchio takes his leave, and wishes you bon voyage!" He kisses the contessa's delicate hands twice effusively, and bows himself out.

Alone, Eugenia gazes about with hopeless eyes. A despair is upon her face; with twitching lips, she sighs helplessly: "Bolza—he has his hand everywhere!" Then, glancing at the letter of introduction to Pergolese, she starts, like a steed under the spur, and studies it, nervously, so that she may act in accord with its

words, and moans: "I will not fail, I can not fail I dare not fail! For Bolza's heel is on my neck, and he is merciless!"*

CHAPTER XII.

"LAST NIGHT YOU DID NOT THINK ME A CHILD!"

The next day la Contessa di Vilermo sends, accompanied by her card, the letter of introduction to il Cavaliere da Messina. It is from Giovanni Mateo, the impresario of the great opera house of Naples, a gentleman who Carlo believes to be not only his true friend, but also an ardent lover of Italian liberty.

Addressed to him from Pau, that popular wateringplace of the French Pyrenees, it states that la contessa is journeying from this resort, where she has spent the early months of winter, to Trieste, via Genoa, Milan, and Venice. Pursuit for the San Carlo of an elusive prima donna, who was also spending the winter at Pau, had brought Mateo to the Pyrenees, where he has encountered la Contessa di Vilermo, a valued friend.

Knowing that this lady will be without escort through a part of Italy, almost in the throes of revolution, and having heard from Pergolese himself that he would some time in the early spring be returning to Milan, via Marseilles, Mateo has taken the liberty of giving this letter to la contessa, in the hope that, should she meet him, she may obtain Da Messina's protection as far as Milan, from which point the country will perhaps be less disturbed by political agitation.

The letter brings no suspicion to Carlo's mind, but

^{*}This method of using the fears of his agents to compel them to any infamy to gain the information he desired, was a favorite method of Bolza, the head of the Lombardian police in 1848, though not original, it having been borrowed from Fouché, the minister of police of the First Napoleon, who, to his disgrace, organized in nearly every capital of Europe his celebrated "Haute Polite." Many a beautiful Prussian woman, many a beautiful Italian woman, suffered because she would not betray the secrets of her people.—Ed.

with it comes to him, after calling on Signora di Vilermo, a problem. Shall he offer the escort that is asked to Milan, via Genoa?

Every throb of his lover's heart cries out that it will destroy the sweet intimacy that has grown up between him and his sweetheart. But of this intimacy he knows

the insidious danger.

When he was only padrone, and Estelle his bound-girl, it had, perhaps, been barbarous, yet surely innocent. But now, when, each evening, as his betrothed says adieu to leave him for her lonely chamber, her arms seem to cling closer and closer about him, as it she could not bear to say "Good night!" he feels the insidious temptation, even if she does not.

"Some time love will overcome me," he reflects, "and then—God forgive me—I am dishonored! She is so helpless in my hands! Though she is a widow,

she is as innocent as a child."

Therefore, not altogether with dissent, Da Messina considers the addition of a chaperone to their party.

Though it will deprive him of a companionship which is the delight of his soul, it will also be a barrier for his sweetheart against what he dreads now — his over-

whelming desire.

So, this evening, he mentions the matter to Estelle, and certain incidents which occur in connection with it show him how light a veil floats betwixt them and the forgetfulness of everything in this world save love.

They have come in from the theater again, where he had taken her to see Lemerciere's "Agamemnon," thinking it best to give Estelle every opportunity to study the methods of the stage. Taking this opportunity, he tells his sweetheart that he intends to add another to their party as far as Milan. "I have already seen the lady," he observes.

"What lady?" she gasps, in astonished voice.

"One who brought a letter of introduction from my friend Mateo, the great impresario, under whose management, perchance, some day you may warble. This lady is compelled to go to Milan, and will journey with us to that city. Don't pout so viciously!" he laughs. "You have already seen her. She tells me that she heard your voice in that corridor one day, and, being charmed by its beauty, took the liberty of asking to hear more of it. She thinks that some day you will become a great artiste."

"Oh, yes! La Contessa di Vilermo! I have seen

her before," replies Estelle.

"And never told me of it!" returns her padrone.

"It is well, for my happiness, that the Contessa di Vilermo is not a gentleman."

But his ward does not answer this. She will not confess to a jealousy which she knows her lover will condemn, and yet one which still lingers in her heart.

But suddenly all else, save that she will be separated by the presence of another from $t\hat{e}te-\hat{a}-t\hat{e}te$ with the man she loves, overcomes her. She puts her arms about him, and sobs: "O Carlo, don't let her come! She will be forever between us! We shall never be alone. Before this woman, I shall no more receive the caresses that have made these two days to me a paradise." Then her eyes blaze up in reproach, and she queries, falteringly: "Thou hast already become tired of me?"

"Gran Dio, no! Never accuse me of that!" His face, for a moment stern, grows soft with passion; he murmurs: "Each kiss from your lips has made me long for a thousand more, bell' idolo! Besides, I wish no careless tongues—and there are many in Italy—to speak slightingly of one who, by the blessing of God, soon shall be honored, not as my mistress, but as my wife."

At the word, her arms close round him, as he reasons with her, showing her that their hearts are now too close together for anything to come between them. And she answering nothing, he goes away to complete certain business arrangements for arms and supplies of ammunition, for in Marseilles, as well as in Lyons, Da

Messina, taking his life in his hand, is still working for Italy.

Receiving Estelle's good-night kiss, her maestro thinks the matter is settled; but does not remember that one argument seldom suffices with a woman.

Returning from his secret interview with certain agents of English manufacturers, Carlo arrives at the Hotel de Naples as the clock strikes two. In the dark hallway, a man steps beside him, and, recognizing Jacques Parogue, Pergolese's face grows ashen. An awful fear that his sweetheart may yet be torn from him by French justice seems to make his heart stop beating.

"I mean you no harm, Monsieur," says Parogue respectfully, noticing the other start. Then he whispers: "I have a warning that may be of value to you. I thought I would do something for the money you squandered on me. It is better that I speak it in your ear."

"Yes, in my rooms," answers Da Messina, leading

the way to his apartments.

He has scarce turned up the light in his parlor, and Jacques Parogue has just opened his mouth to give him some very interesting information, when to them floats the sound of muffled grief from the neighboring chamber.

"Estelle, what is the matter?" asks Pergolese, anx-

iously, as he steps toward her door.

"She is crying!" growls the old mouchard, savagely, remembering the red shoulders he had seen and the plaints he had heard two evenings before. "You are too severe with your apprentice, Italian padrone. I care not to hear the sound of her suffering. To-morrow I will speak to you," and so goes away, and never comes back.

For, coming down the stairs, Parogue mutters: "Curses upon this Italian brute! He has been beating that poor girl again. To the devil with such apostles of liberty! He can save his own dastard bones, if he can." And therefore leaves unuttered words that would have forever prevented la Contessa di Vilermo from receiving escort from Da Messina.

But had the old gendarme taken the trouble to look at the face of this brutal Italian, he would have seen such anxiety in it that it might have given him other judgment. Da Messina is saying, lovingly: "Estelle, mia anima, speak to me!" There is no answer, though the sobbing ceases. "Estelle!" he cries, sharply, for he half guesses the cause of the trouble, and the tears even of the women they love are mostly unpleasant to men.

- "Yes, sir!"
- "Are you ill?"
- "No, I-I am unhappy."
- " Why?"

"Nothing! Everything! You cut me off from loving you! You placed another woman—"

But her voice stops here, for Da Messina breaks in, decisively: "To-morrow la contessa sails with us to Genoa! I have reasoned the matter to you as a woman; now I tell you this as a child. Harken to my words! Since you are my rebellious bound-girl, I shall no more be your lover—only your padrone—until I have given you your liberty. As soon as I dare do that, I shall come to you. Then, pardi, you, little one, may be the tyrant to thy Carlo!"

He turns almost angrily toward his door, for he is annoyed that uncalled-for tears have deprived him of the revelation of Parogue. Yet it is with slow, sad steps. He remembers it is the first discord that has come between them since their lips met.

But another has a word to say to this! Just as Da Messina reaches the entrance of his chamber, Estelle's door bursts open, and a white-robed figure, with arms gleaming like ivory, and nude, dimpled feet thrust into slippers, one of which flies off as she crosses the apartment, runs to him, and, clasping him round the waist from behind, falls at his feet, and with tears, piteous

entreaties, and loving words, cries out: "Gran Dio,

how cruel you are to me!"

"Cruel to thee?" His arms are about her; she is seated in his lap, and he is soothing her with tender caresses, which, perchance, are made more fervid by the extreme beauty and careless abandon of the penitent, who, in the alluring dishabille of night, nestles so close to him.

"I—I went to bed," she sobs, "but could not sleep! I suffered——"

"Suffered! Because of la contessa, to whom I have said scarce three dozen words?"

"Not for her; but because she will come between me and your love. I—I shall be alone, as I was before you made my life glorious by the first love, the last love, I shall ever know. Ah, ingrate, I will show you what you lose! Is not this kiss pleasant? Does not this caress give thee rapture?" And she struggles to gain her will by very helplessness; her dainty arms cling to him, her delicate bosom beats against his heart like the fluttering of a bird.

Suddenly her eyes grow horrified. The hoarse voice of a man fighting against himself speaks to her: "I reasoned with you as a woman; you answer me as a child—as such I treat thee! Go to thy chamber! If thou art not obedient to-morrow, you shall learn that thy padrone has a stern hand, Mademoiselle Rebel."

He puts her from him; her eyes droop before his

almost savage glance.

"Yes! I—I—please let me get my slipper on?" she sobs, and gropes for it with half-blinded eyes.

"Now make me courtesy and retire!"

"Yes, mio—mio padrone." Draping the short robe de nuit about her, she tremblingly makes schoolgirl obeisance. As she half sinks before him, the exquisite contours of her figure, outlined severely by the clinging, semi-diaphanous muslin, make him start with a suppressed exclamation, part almost of surprise, part of rapture.

The pathetic reproach in her sweet eyes cries to his heart. In another instant his love will overcome him.

Then, enraged with himself, he seizes her delicate shoulder, and the sweet being that tempts him makes hurried exit to her chamber. There is a sudden click of bolt. He tosses the key over the transom to her, and commands: "Thou art a prisoner! Don't dare unlock that door until to-morrow morning; then see that you come to me obedient!"

With this, despite some piteous sighs that reach him faintly, Da Messina leaves the parlor, and paces the corridor, muttering to himself: "God forgive me! I locked that door, not upon that innocent, but upon my dastard self!"

Yet the next morning, such are woman's vagaries, he has scarce seated himself at the breakfast table, when two soft hands blind his eyes, and a sweet voice whispers: "Guess who?" then laughs: "You don't recognize my tone; see if you remember my lips!" Next says, penitently: "I am obedient; I will treat this lady you bring with us with every courtesy. Only, I beg I shall have thy permission, stern padrone, to wear a new and handsome frock."

"Diavolo!" mutters Da Messina, with a grin. "Thou hast not waited for my assent," and glances at a very charming picture of budding girlhood, in a tight-fitting traveling frock, of gray Lyons velvet.

"Please, please forgive the expense!" she pleads, anxiously; then falters: "I—I so want to look well in thine eyes!" and the next second queries, archly: "Dost

like me, mio padrone?"

"Cospetto, you are a pretty child!"

"Last night you did not think me a child, though

you treated me as one."

Her eyes have a veiled inquiry in their brown depths that makes Carlo ashamed of himself, and the great tenor's face grows red as he chokes over his coffee that his bound-maid, sitting across the breakfast-table from him, has just poured out with dainty hands.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE COMMOTION AT THE OPERA HOUSE.

Therefore, that Friday afternoon, upon the deck of one of the steamboats of the Sardinian line, as they sail out of the old port of Marseilles, Carlo brings the contessa to his ward, and Estelle receives her with a demure coldness that makes Da Messina for the moment frown. But the next second astonishment passes over his face, as he sees Signora di Vilermo do something he could not, perhaps, have done for her—win the heart of his ward by that subtlety given to a few women, of divining the minds of those they look upon. For, the moment this lady meets Estelle, with exquisite tact she greets her as comrade, and treats her as such.

She remarks: "You must not put me at arms' length, my dear, when I had so much trouble to win

a place at your side."

"Indeed!" says Estelle, raising her eyebrows, and in her childish costume looking almost an *enfante* gaitée.

"Yes, I had great difficulty in persuading your guardian to take me with you, Mademoiselle Chartres. He feared you would not care for a companion."

"Oh, my padrone often thinks of me!" remarks the

girl, casting a grateful glance toward Carlo.

"Then won't you come with me to our stateroom?" asks la contessa. "I have arranged with the stewardess. I feared you might be lonely; we will be comrades," and so carries her away.

Da Messina, gazing after them, as they trip upon the deck, the elder *spirituelle*, *svelte*, and yet stately in her beauty, the younger like a rosebud opening to the sun, for this young widow's soul seems to be developing under her first passion.

With a little grin upon his face, he thinks: "Sapristit.

Had Signora di Vilermo called my sweetheart 'child,' she had never got her arm about Estelle's waist as she has now."

Half an hour afterward he hears the ladies laughing and chatting as he raps upon their stateroom door and suggests supper. And they all going to the dining salon, Estelle finds she is still not permitted a young lady's privilege of selecting what she is to eat. As the dessert is brought in, some marrons glacées are placed within her reach.

She knows these are forbidden to vocal aspirants, and, looking at her padrone, pleads: "May I?"

"Why, certo, little one," he says, pleasantly, "while we are en voyage; though sweetmeats are by no means

beneficial to that charming voice."

But, having been deprived of sugar plums for some time past, Estelle accepts Carlo's permission, and makes so brisk an attack upon the dainties that la contessa laughs: "Cospetto, an indulgent padrone!" then cries: "Let's put vocal culture aside for our trip, though in Milan I presume mademoiselle will have to study all the harder. During the voyage both you and I, cavaliere, will instruct your pupil in Italian. Estelle longs to learn the language. Is it not wonderful the progress she has already made? She knows every love term in it!" With one of her eyes slightly raised to give her remark piquancy, the lady spy catches a flush on Estelle's face, bright as the crimson sunset that comes in through the cabin windows; with the other she notes that Da Messina is smiling very contentedly.

The meal finished, they all go out on the deck, for the night is beautiful, and the Mediterranean soft as a summer lake. The hazy shores of France are upon their left, but growing slightly indistinct, for they are

leaving them.

The moon has risen, and, the air being balmy, both Eugenia and Carlo rather laughingly acting on la contessa's suggestion, proceed to teach Estelle Italian, the ladies already calling each other by their first names.

With this, a little incident arises that tells the astute observer of the jealous heart for her maestro that is throbbing in his pupil's breast. La contessa, in the carelessness of absolute familiarity, using an extremely colloquial expression that is not perfect Italian, Da Messina, who wishes Estelle to acquire the language accurately, suggests to Eugenia a correction of her phrase, remarking: "Only to the adept can be pardoned the carelessness of absolute confidence."

"Ah!" jeers the lady, not altogether pleased at his correction. "Now, Estelle, we are comrades — two young ladies and one padrone! Would you like me tomorrow, in Genoa, Signore da Messina, to sign a little stamped paper like the one by which you hold mademoiselle so firmly? Perchance you would place me again *en fillette*, and I should have to ask permission for bonbons, beaux, and other pleasures of life?"

And in truth Eugenia would have been pleased to have even given herself over to the hard lot of Italian padroneship, could she have gained Da Messina's secret—to betray him. Any bondage seems light to her compared with the dominion of Bolza, to whose hands she is now journeying.

But a low voice, of such intensity it startles Eugenia, now answers her light words: "Mio padrone has promised to have no other apprentice than me. Madame la Comtesse, I have the honor of being the only bound-girl of Pergolese!"

"Ghieu!" laughs Carlo. "The government of one

spitfire is too much for poor Pergolese!"

But the passion of Estelle's voice has certified her secret to the astute ears of Eugenia, who now, with supreme tact, alleging a slight mal de mer, though the boat is as steady as a house, goes to her stateroom, and leaves the maestro and his pupil as they long to be—together and alone.

The deck is nearly deserted, for it is growing late. A large wheelhouse, near the stern, gives these two the privacy they seek.

"You are pleased?" asks Da Messina, nodding in the direction where the soft frou frou of skirts tells them la contessa is descending the companion-way.

"With Eugenia? Oh, very much! But still, chiefly because she leaves us en tête-à-tête," and Estelle's little

hand seeks the protection of his clasp.

"Ah, well, it will not be long before our trip is ended," he remarks, "though I am glad you like her.

Two nights from now, Milano!"

"Yes! As the clouds are rising from my head, they are darkening—O Dio!—over yours, my Carlo, when to your dear life comes the danger of Austrian courtmartial!"

And she would go tearfully to his arms did not, at this moment, la contessa stand before them, and say, hurriedly: "Estelle, the key of our stateroom! I forgot it was in your pocket."

"Oh—ah! Yes, I—I forgot it also," replies the girl,

and hands Eugenia the implement demanded.

"Thanks, no; I still have my mal de mer," she replies to Da Messina's polite invitation to remain with them, though he is relieved as she goes away, for it permits him to place a good-night kiss upon the lips of his betrothed.

But il cavaliere would probably not rest so well in his stateroom this evening did he know that Eugenia, as she glided to them with very light steps round the wheelhouse, glad of an excuse for hearing their words of privacy, had caught Estelle's last, hasty phrase, "the

danger of an Austrian court-martial."

This indicates some business Da Messina has done for Lombardian liberty in France. He has been from Italy so long that Eugenia is now almost sure his visit to Paris has not been altogether to bring back this bound-girl, even though her voice gives promise of great future value to her padrone. In addition, she is satisfied that this girl, dressed as a child—for she is now quite well assured that Estelle is older than her garb—loves this man. "This is enough for to-night!"

she thinks. "To-morrow will bring me more! And God help me, I must have more for Bolza!" and tosses

uneasily upon her pillow, as she goes to sleep.

The next morning, the maritime Alps are like a blue haze upon the steamer's port bow, and, amid the chattering of the breakfast table, no voices are lighter than those of Da Messina and the two ladies under his charge, though in truth everybody on the boat is more or less anxious, with the exception of a few English tourists, bound for Sardinia and Sicily. The men of trade, Italian, French, and German, who are journeying to Italy, all know that war means destruction to commercial interests. Many of the ladies traveling on this ship have friends or relatives in the Sardinian army. A couple of Austrian officers, returning to their commands, are very well aware that Radetzky has sent for reënforcements, which can not get to him before spring. Even Da Messina's thoughts are quite often far away from his sweetheart. The future of the next few weeks looms up before this Italian conspirator big as a mountain rising from the sea!

As for Estelle, her little foot is tapping the deck uneasily. Every revolution of the wheel is bringing the man she loves nearer to danger; while, gazing at them both, sits their monitor, pondering how to find some rift in the armor of this girl's heart that will open-

it to insidious attack.

A few minutes after, as she sits on the camp-stool, Estelle standing by her side, the devil, sitting at Eugenia's dainty elbow, aids her happy divination. They are alone for the moment, their escort having been carried forward by some admirers, who have recognized him, to enjoy a cigar, one of the pleasures of life that is now drifting away from him, for no patriots in Lombardy use tobacco, upon which a mighty duty has been levied by their oppressors.

Near them are the two Austrian officers, pacing the deck together. Chancing to pause in the turn of his promenade, and speaking on this very subject, the

elder, a captain, says: "They tell me that la bella Olinska, who warbles so sweetly to us at La Scala, is so good an Italian that she has given up, rather than pay tax upon them, her favorite cigarettes."

"Mein Gott!" guffaws his companion, a young ensign of the Regiment Archduke Charles. "They also say that la diva has given up Pergolese, which rather

proves that she has become an Austrian."

"Verfleuch!" rejoins his senior. "Sophie is too much in love with Pergolese to ever relinquish him. I am told this so-called patriot-tenor is on board—a foolish fellow to go back to Milan just at present; but I

presume the divine Sophie beckons to him."

These careless remarks have been overheard by both the ladies. Watching Estelle carefully, Eugenia sees in her eyes an anguish, that is replaced by a sudden potent fire. Catching this, the astute plotter thinks: "Oho! A mighty jealousy for the reigning prima donna at La Scala, Sophie Olinska, whom the world calls Pergolese's mistress! I had a guess of this before! This is my opening wedge that will gain me the secrets of thy maestro, little one!"

When Da Messina returns to them, the coldness of his ward's greeting adds to la contessa's conviction, though the gentleman, in the hurry of preparing for disembarkation, doesn't seem to notice that his proté-

geë's eyes turn from his.

It is four o'clock in the afternoon. As they drive over blue water straight at the mountain range, a rift in the Apennines opens before them, running to the sea to make a roadstead. On either side, two great lighthoused jetties, the Molo Nuovo and the Molo Vecchio, fight off the surf to give greater security and size to the harbor. Behind them, terrace upon terrace, straight from the water, rise the marble palaces and stately churches of Genoa, gleaming white in the sun upon the hillsides, and shading away to dirty browns and blues in the ravines nearer the water.

"Genoa la superba!" cries Carlo; but the only an-

swer he gets is an extremely anxious look from Estelle. She knows he is nearer danger; that beyond the single range of mountains fronting them are the Austrian bayonets.

Half an hour afterward, their vessel, at anchor in the harbor, is surrounded by a concourse of shore boats, manned by bronzed, athletic barcaroli, of dark, flashing eyes, and vociferous exclamations, who shout: "Un batello signori, unbatello!" Selecting one of these, they are rowed toward the Ponte Reale. Here, for the first time, Eugenia is assured that Pegolese loves his ward.

There is a little swell upon the water of the harbor, which, dashing upon the stone steps leading up to the quay, makes them slippery, while it gives an uneasy motion to the boat. Unaccustomed to the sea, Estelle hangs back timidly. From that moment, Da Messina, intrusting his older charge to one of the Italian boatmen, gives all his attention to his bound-girl.

Perchance piqued at Carlo's neglect, Signora di Vilermo, turning her head as she is assisted up to the parapet, notices that at first he speaks to his ward reassuringly. But she still hesitating, he stoops, and lifting her light form very tenderly and carefully, makes his way up the slippery stairs, whispering into her pretty ear what the boatmen, perhaps, think are words of chiding; but this woman of astute mind, espying the blushing face, drooping eyes, and tight clutch of his burden's arms about her maestro, knows are words of love.

In another second, he places Estelle upon the stone walk, and says, lightly: "Run along, petite, in front of me and la contessa."

Turning to obey, she pauses for a moment, astonished; then her eyes light up with pride in the man she loves, for the boatmen, refusing fare, are all with doffed caps and bowed heads, saying: "Welcome to Italia, Pergolese!"

In a moment three bronzed forms are bearing their

luggage in front of them, and, jostling their way along the crowded Porto, which is just at present blocked by a column of marching infantry, for everything shows that the town is heavily garrisoned and upon a war footing.

Five minutes after, they are at a nearby hotel, the Croce di Malta. Here they select a charming *suite* of three bedrooms and a parlor, into which very shortly both ladies come, retoileted, after their voyage, Eugenia looking almost stately, though exceedingly graceful, in a black evening robe, while, in exact contradistinction, Estelle is dressed in a little white *foulard* frock, deftly constructed by a *modiste* in Marseilles to make her extremely youthful.

Looking at his watch, Da Messina remarks: "I would have taken diligence this evening to Milan, but the only one we could catch is at seven o'clock, and I feared, after the sea voyage, you were too tired for a continuous eighteen-hour ride." As he speaks, his eyes

turn tenderly toward Estelle.

Noting this, it perchance hardens Eugenia's heart to this handsome fellow, whom she is to betray; for la contessa would quite willingly give herself to this gentleman if she could only win, by his confidence, her safety from Bolza. But with a very astute mind, she has determined that this man is in love with but one lady in the party—and that is his bound-girl. "Of course, he has but to call her to him, and she dare not disobey!" she sneers.

After dinner, which they take in the public diningroom, Signora di Vilermo, apparently willing to give Carlo and Estelle *tête-à-tête*, leaves them, on the plea that she has a visit to make to some friends in the town.

So, after nightfall, the two, with no one between them, stroll out to enjoy a moonlight ramble over the center of the city.

A very few steps take them to the Strada degli Ore-

fici, where that wondrous filigree work of gold and

silver, peculiar to Genoa, is manufactured.

And some magnificent specimens coming under their eyes, Carlo escorts his ward into one of the shops, and buys for her slender waist a very beautiful, golden band. "It is my first present to thee, but here is another," he remarks, and, leading her into the street, slips upon the second finger of her left hand a jeweled ring, whispering, ardently: "In proof of my troth."

With this, surprise strikes him, for the girl kisses it rapturously, but instantly removes it from her finger, and, concealing it in her bosom, says, simply: "Thy safety demands that thy bound-girl does not wear this openly. It would be a curious thing for my padrone to be known as the affianced of his property—for that's what I am under Italian law, as near as nineteenth century jurisprudence can make it."

Then she puts up a rather piteous face to him, and pleads: "Can't I have a little money to spend, Carlo?" For in the company of another woman, who has plenty in her pocket, Estelle has begun to feel in the emptiness of her purse the absolute dependence of her state.

"Certainly!" he says, quickly. "Only you must spend it immediately, because a rich apprentice would be an anomaly. Do you want to buy anything?"

"Oh, so much! I wish to get some of that beautiful work in that shop for a lady who has been very kind to me."

"Sapristi! The one you cried about two days ago?"

"Yes. Eugenia and I are comrades now."

"Why, certainly! Buy for la contessa what you please, and any time you need money, come to me. Only, don't have in your pocket more than a few francs at a time. On little things depend much greater ones."

Going in, Estelle selects a magnificent piece of Genoa filigree to give as a present to the woman who has

gained her confidence to betray her.

Then the two climb the hill, and, turning along the Via Carlo Felice, pass the great opera house of that

name, where Pergolese tells his sweetheart he made his

début on the Italian stage.

"Santa Maria!" he laughs, looking toward the building whose great façade is lighted up, a crowd of carriages and loungers about it. "Mario and Grisi are singing 'Lucrezia Borgia.' Would you like to step over with me, petite, and hear an act or two of Donizetti?"

"Oh, delightful! But my dress?"

"Is well enough for a child like thee." He pats her cheek playfully. "Besides, in a *loge* you will scarce be noticed."

So the two cross the street, and Estelle gets some little inkling of what it means to be a popular tenor in enthusiastic Italy. Even in the entrance, half a dozen hackmen doff their hats, and murmur "Pergolese!" as if they were praying to a saint.

The next second, the manager comes flying from his private office, and, with cries of love, embraces her

padrone, as she stands bashfully looking on.

But, apparently not caring for an ovation, her maestro, after a few words stating his wishes, and also requesting that his presence be not made known, beckons his ward to him, and presents the impresario to her, saying: "This little lady is my favorite pupil." Then, calling a passing flower-girl, he asks: "Would you like some posies, Estelle, to toss to the sweetest tenor in the world? It is the custom among ladies here." And, without waiting for her assent, he fills his bound-girl's hands with bunches of white blossoms, over which her eyes gaze in loving gratitude at this man, whose rule, though absolute, is so tender.

Then, he escorting her as if she were a grande dame, they are conducted to the manager's box upon the grand tier, where Estelle sits quietly behind the shoulder of her guardian, and looks out upon the great Italian opera house, with its crowded, clamorous pit, and boxes, tier on tier, filled with the fashion, beauty, and wealth of

what is probably the most aristocratic seaport in the world.

Taking advantage of a lull in the music, Da Messina, who has remained at the back of the loge, explains to her that she will see more of the social side of the affair during the entre acte, when general visiting between friends takes place, and refreshments are passed about. "Sapristi!" he laughs. "I already smell the macaroni à la Napoli the economists in the upper boxes are cooking for their suppers."

But his *protégée*, in the lovely strains of Donizetti's masterpiece, soon forgets all else except the exquisite phrasing and charming singing of Mario, as he rings out, perchance, the sweetest song ever written for the tenor voice, "Il Pescatore." And, at the rapturous close, carried away by excitement, she trips to the front of the box, and, imitating other ladies, tosses some of the flowers in her hand to the sweet-voiced tenor.

Then suddenly, fearing her *maestro* will be jealous, she turns to him, and, kissing a white rose, places it in his buttonhole, murmuring: "Forgive me!"

"For what — liking Mario's singing?" he laughs. "Cospetto! I am enthusiastic about the fellow myself."

So, the curtain having fallen on numerous encores, and Pergolese himself getting excited, and stepping to the front of his box to applaud, someone in the audience chances to catch sight of his well-known features, curly hair, and flashing eyes. In almost a second the cry has gone up: "Pergolese! Viva Pergolese!" and the audience would probably break forth in a furor of applause for the artist, for already opera glasses are being directed at him, and ladies in the neighboring boxes toss flowers upon him, great heaps of them, that they had kept for Grisi, and hands are commencing to smite each other in the pit, did not of a sudden someone in the gallery cry: "Viva Pergolese!" and "Evviva L'ITALIA!" And the ovation changes from homage to the artist whom they love to homage to the patriot that they adore.

"Viva Mazzini! Viva Garibaldi! Viva Pergolese! Viva Carlo Alberto!" And the audience, in their crazy, Italian way, begin singing the hymn of Pio Nono, that pontiff, who, it was expected, would lend his might for Italian unity.

While this is going on, the orchestra, actuated by some curious freak, are flying back to their instruments, and, in the midst of this, Mario, costumed as the fisherman, dashes into the box, and the two great artists embrace each other, the elder saying that Madame Grisi begs that Pergolese will come behind the scenes to see her.

But just here everything seems to stop in the house. The curtain is rolling up, the chorus are grouped about the stage, Tomassi, the leader, is waving his baton like a crazy man, and up rolls "O Signore dal tetto natio!" that great chorus from Verdi's "I Lombardi," which was now the battle-hymn of the Milanse against their Austrian tyrants. Then the whole house takes up the strain, and Pergolese, perhaps remembering a brother killed for singing of Italian liberty, after one great flush of triumph, sinks down on the seat, sobbing like a child.

As for Estelle, she has gone frantic with the rest of the audience. She is applauding with her two little hands, singing, as crazily as any of them, the Lombardian hymn, and crying: "Viva Garibaldi! Viva Mazzini! Evviva l'Italia!" as loud as any of the mad boys in the gallery. She is even slapping the shoulder of this maestro whom she fears, and crying, like some of the wild ones in the pit: "Abasso Austria!"

But, just at this moment, some man in the gallery chancing to cry out, "Maladetto Massini!" there begins an incipient riot.

Whereupon the manager of the theater, flying into their box, falls on his knees before Pergolese, and, with clasped hands, beseeches: "Good friend, great artist whom I love, please God, get out of here, or the performance won't go on! They will tear the benches up

and twist the gas-fixtures out of their sockets! I know my mob when they start! For the love of God, get you gene, my patriot, mio caro Pergolese! I will show you

a private stairway."

With this, the tenor, anxious to oblige his friend, and probably reflecting that, when he passes under Austrian rule, this outburst will do him no good, follows the impresario out, Estelle tripping behind them, a great triumph upon her face; for this man she loves is honored by his people.

But the color leaves even her lips as they cass out of the side entrance. She catches the solemn words of one gentleman whispering to another: "I am very sorry for this affair. The Austrian police won't forgive this. If they can but get an overt act out of Pergolese, he is gone like the Bandiera brothers, Menotti, and so many others who have worked for United Italy."

Lingering to hear this cruel prediction, Estelle is called by her guardian from a carriage: "Quick, little one-jump in beside me!" And they riding home, she buries her head in his shoulder and sobs, partly from excited nerves, but chiefly from fear for the being she

loves.

"Italian liberty is too strong for your delicate frame and ardent heart," he says. "I have been thinking that I have no right to risk you upon the scene of insurrection, even if my not bringing an apprentice to Milan does look suspicious to Bolza and his secret police. So

I shall place you with a family here."

But she, throwing her arms around him, clings to him tight as the death she fears may come upon him, and whispers: "Anything but that! With you gone from me to the land of conflict, I shall die of apprehension! No, no, my Carlo! I have not won thee to lose thee in four days! Not even Austrian bullets shall put me from you!"

"Then we will go together!" he whispers to her, and she, nestling her hand in his, dries her eyes as they

reach their hotel.

CHAPTER XIV.

" NOW IT IS THY HEAD OR MINE!"

At the Croce di Malta, they find the contessa awaiting them, and Estelle giving to Eugenia her present very prettily, puts not only astonishment at its value, but such a pang into this woman's heart that, if it were not her head or Pergolese's, she would let Estelle's lover go his way, and perchance even give him warning.

But while Carlo and his ward have been at the theater, she has wandered covertly to a steep and out-of-the-way street, near the Muro dei Zingari. Here to her cautious rapping has been opened the deep-set door of a large house. A moment later she is in consultation with Donetto, who is en secret in this town, where his life would scarce be worth a maravedi, were he

known as the agent of the Austrian police.

After receiving her report, he has said to her, severely: "What you bring me means nothing, Madame! Bolza must have evidence of some overt act, by which he can destroy this accursed conspirator, whom I believe they are fêting even now at the Carlo Felice, and information such as will defeat the entry of arms into Lombardy. You understand exactly how you stand," he continues. "It is practically Pergolese or you! So work for thy immunity from Bolza's wrath, bella donna! In case you are compelled to write, address me as formerly. I shall be in Milan in four days, and my name is not known as Bolza's to these conspirators." And he bows la contessa out, a frantic eagerness in her soul to discover what will save her.

The next morning, her mind being spurred to alertness, an incident, insignificant in itself, comes to her that gives her a little hope. As is usual, two diligences leave each day for Milan, one at two o'clock in the afternoon and the other at seven in the evening. The trip takes about eighteen hours. The two o'clock

conveyance will be the most convenient, for by it they will arrive in the Lombardian capital in the morning. But Pergolese, though he apparently has nothing to do except to shake hands with admirers of art and Italian liberty who come to the hotel in flocks, remarks that they will not leave until seven o'clock.

This selection of an inconvenient hour of departure doesn't seem logical to a woman whose intellect has been sharpened by her fears. Though Pergolese says he has business, Eugenia can not discover it, as he is in her company and that of his ward most of the day. Therefore, she is pretty confident he has some hidden

reason for taking the seven o'clock vehicle.

Turning this over in her mind, these things strike her strongly: Leaving at two o'clock, they reach Milan in the morning, but cross the Austrian frontier in the night. Leaving at seven o'clock, they arrive at Milan in the afternoon, but pass into Lombardy after the sun is well up. The only reason she can imagine for Pergolese's selection of the latter trip is that he wishes to cross the frontier after people are up and doing.

"Santa Maria! The frontier after daylight!" she reflects. "He must want to see somebody there, who might be asleep and not to be encountered during the night! What was it that both Benuchio and Donetto said to me: 'Discover what will defeat the entry of arms into Lombardy!' The supreme difficulty with their transportation, of course, will be at the frontier. Mayhap, it is somebody about this business that my Italian conspirator wishes to meet."

But this is only a faint suggestion to her mind, and, though it determines her to watch the proceedings of Carlo very closely, as they make their journey to Milan, she has no great hope of it; and, with a rather sad face, accompanies Pergolese and his ward when he sug-

gests a drive up to the Acqua Sola.

Here they wander through the gardens, and finally sit down not very far from the peculiar, old fountain, whose curious bowl is decorated with hideous heads, from whose grinning mouths the water dashes, yet a little out of the crowd, listening, this Sunday afternoon, to the fine military band.

As he lounges, Da Messina, asking the permission not only of the contessa, but also, to that lady's astonishment, the assent of his bound-girl, lights a cigar. Lazily blowing the smoke in rings about him, with the sadness of a confirmed lover of the weed, he remarks: "To-morrow morning I shall be like a man who has lost his best friend!"

"Thy best friend?" falters Estelle, reproach in her radiant eyes.

"You mean your cigars?" laughs la contessa.

"Yes," he answers, "though 'tis naught to be merry over. After we cross the frontier, to-morrow, I am divorced from tobacco."

"And why?" asks his ward, who does not altogether understand this peculiarity of Lombardian patriotism.

"Why? Because the Committee have recommended that no Milanese use cigars or tobacco, the monopoly of which pays our rulers such enormous tax that it enables Austria to support the garrisons that hold us slaves," he says bitterly. "Diavolo! If I had this sweet morsel in my mouth, I would probably have my cigar pulled from between my lips by the first true Italian who saw me on the Corso, or the Piazza Duomo, of my city. Corpo di San Marco! I'd do it myself to another man!" *

"So you will not be able to smoke because it will put

^{*} This curious action of the Milanese patriots of 1848 came about in this

Austria had made a government monopoly of tobacco, and from it derived a large portion of its revenue. The Milanese, to cripple their rulers, decided to absolutely abstain from all use of the weed, and kept that resolve with astounding resolution for a community where cigarettes were as their daily bread

Dread.

An obsolete by-law of Milan forbade smoking in the streets of the city. This law the patriots revived, and if an Austrian officer was seen with a cigar in the streets he was likely to be assaulted. The bloody scuffle of January 3, rs48, in which eight townspeople were killed and nearly fifty wounded, arose from this, as, when the Milanese gave up smoking, the Austrian soldiers in derision smoked everywhere, and puffed the breath of their nostrils into Italian faces—Collated from History of Lombardo Venetic Insurrection of 1880—Italy in the Nineteenth Century, and Liberation of Italy, by Contessa searesco.—Ed.

money into the pocket of the Austrian government?" asks Estelle, gazing into his face wistfully. Then she half laughs: "Dio mio, without tobacco for thy nerves, thou wilt soon become very cross to me!" adding, with a most alluring moue: "Eugenia, when I am chided in Milan, it will not be because I am naughty, but because Pergolese does not smoke."

"Ma foi, I fear it will not make me good-natured!" Carlo grins, though his mirth has a yellow tinge

about it.

But here, some idea coming into his protégée's bright mind, she queries, anxiously: "If they didn't pay duty, I suppose there would be no harm in cigars?"

"Not a sou marquee!" he replies. "Don't you see,

in Genoa, I am smoking like Vesuvius."

"Yes, indeed I do, Carlo mio!" cries Estelle, in the

careless happiness of love.

But here, noticing a frown upon her guardian's face at her lack of caution, and a look of astonishment in Signora di Vilermo's eyes at the familiarity of a boundgirl's speech, she falters: "Oh, pardon—mio padrone! Please—please!" and, rising, stands before him, and renders to him a very graceful, and exceedingly humble, courtesy.

"Diavolo! 'Tis hard to be stern with thee!" he remarks. "Your sweet face would disarm even the

dreaded Bolza."

At this, la contessa winces, as if stung by the lash, but neither Da Messina nor his ward notice her—they both have eyes, about this time, only for each other.

A few minutes after this, chancing to be alone with him—Eugenia having, in her deft way, given them a tête-à-tête—Estelle suddenly whispers to her guardian, quite bashfully, but very pleadingly: "Mio padrone, can't I, please, have a little money to spend to-day?"

"For what do you wish it, petite?"

"Oh, some young-lady shopping!"

"On Sunday?"

"Yes. I know a shop that is open. Why should I

not? Eugenia and I have been at mass this morning at the San Lorenzo, so I am good for all day. Please, mio padrone, please!" She makes a caress now of the term of servitude she once loathed.

"Darling, if I only dared!" he stammers; then mutters, suddenly: "Help thyself!" and hands her his purse.

Out of this, casting a furtive glance at him, she grabs half a dozen gold pieces, and into his ear flutters: "Please pardon my extravagance."

"Why should you not spend it?" he whispers, in a shamefaced way. "It is thy own money, of which I

have robbed you, little one."

These gold pieces seem to make the robbed one very happy, for even as they drive back to the hotel, she is laughingly tossing the coins up in the air, and saying, archly: "Eugenia has promised to go shopping with me!"

At this sight of gold, la contessa raises her eyebrows, rather astonished at a padrone's liberality; though by this time she has made up her mind, with Continental and Bohemian freedom, that Estelle is probably the child of well-to-do parents, and has been bound to Pergolese, not because of her poverty, but because he can train her exquisite voice better than any teacher in Italy; also, that the padrone has fallen in love with his beautiful captive, and, when she is a little older, intends to make her his mistress, even if she is not that already.

Some things now occur to add strength to this

opinion.

They have scarce alighted from the carriage in front of the Croce di Malta, when Estelle, with a little courtesy, says: "If you don't mind trusting me with Eugenia, we will go for our shopping, mio padrone."

"Certainly not!" replies Da Messina, who thinks it is some lady's fol de rol she wants, and doesn't care, probably from bashfulness, to consult him about it.

But as he turns away, he adds: "I have a little business, myself, with a friend or two." Information that makes Eugenia more anxious to accompany him than his ward.

But she has no time to think of this, for, getting her to an out-of-the-way corridor of the hotel, Estelle whispers such curious questions that astonishment takes all else out of la contessa's head. She stands, gasping with open mouth, as Pergolese's apprentice follows this up by asking, anxiously: "If they caught me, what would they do to me?"

"Imprison you, my poor child!"

"Then I'll try it! I don't want him to be unhappy. You can testify, if I am caught, that he did not know anything about it."

"But, then, I will be accessory before the act," dissents Signora di Vilermo, "and the customs regula-

tions are very severe."

"Peste! Take a little risk for a friend, as we used to say in the convent when the mother superior gave us penance for refusing to report each other, won't you?"

For a moment Eugenia hesitates, then suddenly says: "Well, if you wish it!" For into her mind has flown this thought: "Here is a grand step toward the confi-

dence of my conspirator's sweetheart."

So, the two trip hastily off together to a little to-bacconist's, in the old-fashioned Via Luca, where three ragged boys and a man, leading a couple of donkeys, look in the window at the *bella figlia*, as Estelle purchases a hundred fine Regalias, saying, apologetically, to the old shopman: "They are not for me, Signore, but for a very good friend."

"Oh, la, la! That's what all ladies say when they buy cigars, though these are quite large for your young lips," chuckles the old fellow, as he does up the boxes.

As they stroll back, Estelle carrying her purchase, carefully wrapped up and concealed in her cloak, la contessa, a query in her voice, remarks: "I wonder you

have so kind a feeling for your padrone, when he is so stern to you."

"Stern to me?" You are crazy!"

"Not at all. The night you arrived in Marseilles, didn't I hear your sobs and piteous entreaties, when he

beat you?"

"Oh, yes!" murmurs Estelle, her face growing red with humiliation. "Yes, but I—I deserved it." Then, anxious to defend the man she loves, in voluble untruth, she adds: "It was his duty to punish me! But, you see how kind he is to me—when I am good. You know he is good to me!" she cries, indignantly. "Otherwise, why did you wish to become his apprentice like me? You—you needn't deny it! I saw you meant it by your face in the moonlight on the steamer's deck."

At this, Eugenia bursts out laughing, and gets a step closer to Estelle's heart, as she whispers: "No need to be jealous, *petite*. Pergolese has eyes only for one bound-girl, and that is Mademoiselle Chartres."

"Oh, do you think so?" cries Estelle, clapping her hands joyously, and snuggling close to Signora di Vi-

lermo.

So, coming to the Croce di Malta, the ladies find that Pergolese has not yet returned, and go to their rooms, where, in strict privacy, with trembling fingers, Estelle devotes an hour to making some peculiar preparations

in her toilet for the journey.

Some little time after this, il cavaliere returning, they have a quiet dinner in their parlor, and, as soon as the meal is over, the ladies retire to costume for the trip, leaving Pergolese smoking, as he says, his last après diner cigar. This does not take very long, and their luggage being sent ahead of them, the night being fine, they follow it on foot to the diligence office, which is but a step from the Croce di Malta.

Here they find the coach quite empty, travelers generally journeying from the scene of expected insurrection, rather than toward it, Da Messina remarking that he has had no trouble in engaging the whole of the

coupé. As their passports are being viséed, he wraps up Estelle very carefully, saying: "It will be quite cool as we cross the crest of the mountains."

A few minutes later, he having carefully assisted the ladies to their places, the coach rumbles away over the stony streets.

"We always have the coupé in the diligence," Estelle says, laughingly. "It is our fate. Don't vou remember, Radetzky, at Troyes, sat in the front seat, where Eugenia is now."

"Radetzky!" cries Signora di Vilermo, astonished.

"But not the great marshal," replies Carlo.

"Only his nephew, Captain Franz, of the Regiment Maria Theresa, on the staff of the Governor of Lombardy," prattles Estelle, sitting, very happy, close beside her guardian.

"A fede, you seem to remember the captain very well!" laughs Da Messina.

"Why shouldn't I? You should remember him, too. You saved his life. Why, only a week ago to-night, when he left us at Lyons, you embraced each other. It was Franz and Carlo between you then. He loves you because you saved his life, mio padrone."

Then she suddenly babbles on: "It would not surprise me if he met us at the office of the diligence upon

our arrival in Milan."

"What makes you think that?" asks her macstro.

"Because I wrote to him by last night's post that we were coming."

"Diavolo! You seem anxious to let him know!"

"He—he asked me to," Estelle adds, frankly, though she stammers a little, noticing that Da Messina's manner indicates he is not altogether pleased at her correspondence with the Austrian captain.

But the diligence rumbling over a little bridge across the Polcevera, which is foaming along its stony bed, Estelle, perhaps to avoid Carlo's eyes, puts her head out of the window to inspect the moonlit river. "Oh, look, Eugenia! Isn't it a savage, little torrent?" she cries.

"Ma foi, since both you ladies are enjoying the scenery, with your permission, I will enjoy a cigar," remarks the cavaliere. "I think I have just about enough of these to let me reach the Austrian custom-house without a single dutiable whiff."

At this there is a subdued snicker from Estelle, who is still gazing out of the window; but in the ecstasy of one of his big *celestriales*, Carlo doesn't note his sweetheart's suppressed mirth.

Shortly after this, the conversation from sleepy mono-

syllables gradually dwindles to silence.

The night is well upon them. They are slowly climbing the Apennines, and Estelle, nestling her head upon her padrone's shoulder, goes to sleep. As Carlo finishes his second cigar, he notes that the contessa is already in the land of Nod, and his arm steals about the slight waist of the sleeping figure next to him.

So they journey by Ronco, near the crest of the Apennines, and gradually descend to the hilly country about Arquata, and, passing Novi a little in advance of daybreak, before them lie the great plains and meadows that run down to the River Po.

An hour or two after this, the sun, coming brightly into the diligence, awakes them all. Straining his eyes to the front, as they ride toward the north, there is a strange concern upon Da Messina's face, for this man, though he is going to home and friends, knows that almost in his hand he bears what will bring devastation to many a hearthstone, and despair to many a family, by the death of sons and fathers—the notice that soon they will have arms to strike their tyrants down!

This has kept him awake, and all through the night, as they have approached the Lombardian frontier, the signs of military activity that are evident have made tears come into his manly eyes as he realizes the awful struggle that confronts his native city.

At Novi, they have passed through a strong patrol of cavalry.

Now, as they ride into Tortone, they find the town

garrisoned by a full brigade of infantry.

As the diligence rumbles into the courtyard of the little inn, Carlo, stepping out, hears words from two farmers, who are in for early marketing, that make him know the *cmeute* is very near.

"A good business to-day," says one. "The troops

buy everything."

"Ghieu! This is nothing like the trade over at Alessandria, where Amadio took four loads of potatoes Saturday. He says Carlo Alberto has three full divisions, ready to jump upon the Austrians as soon as Venezia and Milano rise."

"Diavolo! That will come soon enough!" cries the other. "My friend Giacomo, who has just arrived from Ferrara, tells me that a Venetian mob have made the Austrians give up Manin and Tommaseo, and have carried those patriots in triumph around the Piazza di San Marco."

"Then the Virgin help us!" says the other, in peasant timidity. "Who knows but that the Austrians will beat Alberto back, and come upon me and my garden? They burnt the house over my grandfather when they fought the French at Marengo, but ten miles away." He gives a gesture toward the west.

Just here, a young man coming out of the hotel, passes Carlo, and says: "The best wine is in the

osteria, two doors from here, Signore."

"Thank you, friend: I will take the hint," replies il cavaliere, and marches off quickly in the direction indicated.

La contessa, who has been watching him quite carefully, sees no particular reason for this move, even if Pergolese is thirsty, as the door of the wine-room of the inn is only ten feet from his face. She says, lightly, to Estelle: "I think a stroll will do me good," and steps out of the diligence, from which the hostlers are just taking the horses,

"Why, of course!" cries Estelle. "Besides, we have breakfast here, and I am hungry!" And her light feet overtaking Signora di Vilermo, she links her arm in hers before that lady has reached the entrance to the courtyard.

Thus prevented from making any decided attempt to discover what their escort does in the *osteria*, Eugenia, with Estelle hanging on her arm, strolls along the narrow unsidewalked street toward the wine-shop, which seems a tumble-down affair, frequented by a few sots of the town and farmers from the neighboring communes, who have idle hours upon their hands.

Several of these are lounging about the place, and a voice coming quite loudly and triumphantly from the

interior, proclaims that Rusticus is inside.

"By my patron saint!" brags a man, exultantly. "I have made the best deal in hay this year! What do you think, Signore; I have sold one hundred tons to the quartermaster of the Fourth Austrian Hussars, to be delivered, on the 20th, to that official in front of their barracks in Milano."

"Cospetto!" jeers a gruff voice. "I wonder if these Austrians know their horses will be eating Marengo

hay!"

The jeering laugh that comes up at this drowns any other reply, though the contessa, as they pass, suddenly turns and looks at Estelle, for at the word "hay" that young lady has given a sudden and tremulous clutch upon Eugenia's arm. "I—I turned my ankle," she stammers. "They leave so much garbage about these dirty streets."

"Ma foi, I wonder was it the garbage or the hay that made mademoiselle slip!" cogitates her companion.

Her suspicions would probably be increased did she know that Da Messina, as he steps out of the *osteria*, is thinking, rapidly: "One hundred tons of hay will require fifty wagons. Though my Genoa adviser deemed it rash, that arrangement had the boldness of genius. Under the Austrian quartermaster's permits,

these wagons will cross their frontier without customs examination."

Therefore, with a face made bright by hope, he joins the ladies, and escorts them into breakfast at the little inn, where everyone seems to be in that peculiar nervous exaltation that coming war brings to those within reach of it, combatants and non-combatants, men and women. Even as they eat, a couple of batteries of light artillery rumble through the streets, going toward Alessandria.

"Santo Gennaro!" murmurs the landlord, a young and, apparently, sanguine man, who is officiating at the breakfast. "Those fine fellows will be doing something to the Austrians soon."

"And won't the white-coats be doing something also?" returns a gray-bearded farmer, sadly. "Gran Dio! As a boy I remember when Mélas and his Austrians didn't leave a roof in Tortone; nor a loaf of bread, nor a flask of wine neither, when that old plunderer was marching to beseige Massena in Genoa. It's a long while ago, but evil times have come again."

"So they will as long as the troops of any foreign nation occupy Italy!" cries Da Messina, excitedly. Then, apparently to put a more cautious tongue into his mouth, he strolls away for another cigar before they reach the frontier.

Estelle, rising, trips off by his side, but la contessa doesn't offer to accompany them, as she guesses that no very active conspiring will take place in his apprentice's presence.

"He wouldn't compromise that chit; I know by the way he looks at her," thinks Eugenia, and, going back to the diligence, into which the horses are now being put, takes her seat in the *coupé*.

After a minute Estelle comes running to the diligence, and, springing into it, buries a blushing and tearful face deep in her hands.

"Good heavens, child! You are sobbing—what is the matter?" whispers la contessa-

"He—he lectured me for being vain about my—my ankles. He said I had made this dress shorter, when I—I haven't altered it a bit."

"Don't you know," replies la contessa, "that stitching into your skirts, about your hips, a lot of "—she puts her lips close to Estelle's blushing ear, and continues the sentence—" has shortened them?"

"Oh, I forgot that! But it is so unjust, when it was all for his sake!"

"Peste! Can't you see his reproach means he is jealous of every little inch of you?"

"But still, when I only wear this hateful, childish frock because—"

In her indignant grief, Estelle's pretty lips might now emit some almost fatal secret, did not at this moment Da Messina call to her in apparently apologetic voice.

"I—I must go to him. You see, he repents already. Don't you dare say he is unjust to me!" she whispers,

and springs from the vehicle.

"Cospetto! In another moment the emotional creature might have told me something—but all in good time!" philosophises the lady spy, and watches in contented but eager philosophy Da Messina and his sweetheart wander off out of sight into a little copse of chestnut trees that fronts the hotel.

As the driver of the diligence calls, "All aboard!" they come running out of the grove, both apparently

friends again, and in much better spirits.

So much so that, as they ride along, il cavaliere begins humming the hymn of Pio Nono; but suddenly the driver of the diligence stops his team, and, springing from his box, says: "Thank God, there is nobody but your party in the coach to hear you! For the love of God, stop that song the Austrians have prohibited! We are only half a mile from their outposts!"

"Then I have just time for another last cigar," mutters Da Messina, and, producing his case, in which Estelle sees there now are three, he lights up and gloomily smokes.

But approaching the frontier, he tosses the half-consumed weed away, and, pulling out his cigar-case, presents both it and its contents to the officer commanding the few Sardinian troops that are stationed near the posts, that, standing beside the little inn, mark the dividing line of Lombardy and Piedmont.

In the farther portion of this posthouse, through which the boundary line runs, just in the Austrian territory, sit a couple of Imperial officers of cavalry. They are chatting with the Sardinian captain, and are only attended by a few dismounted troopers, the main portion of their command being encamped about three hundred yards from the frontier.

The bulk of the Sardinian troops are likewise in their tents, about the same distance from their boundary; for the commanders on the immediate frontier are very careful about permitting the personal contact of their soldiers, fearing that some sudden *mêlée* among privates may bring on premature hostilities.

As the diligence changes horses, Da Messina makes his declaration, and puts his and the ladies' *impedimenta* under the Austrian customs inspector's eye; and, his party being the only passengers, the examination of their baggage is made quite rapidly.

Then comes the matter of their passports, in which the official is very strict. He scrutinizes, with careful eyes, the two ladies, as they sit in the *coupė*, and compares them with their written descriptions; doing likewise with Da Messina.

Fortunately, their escort has taken the precaution to have the passports *viséed* by the Austrian consul in Genoa. This giving their scrutator confidence, he very shortly returns the papers to their owners.

Then, with a long, deep-drawn breath, as if making up his mind to a desperate act, from which retreat will be impossible, Da Messina steps into the diligence, and takes seat beside his ward

The next second the driver chirps to his fresh team, and, with crack of whip, and a short jolt over a rut in the road, they pass the Austrian frontier. The line of Imperial cavalry is now betwixt them and all return; and Estelle, with a suppressed sigh, puts frantic clutch upon the arm of the man she loves, who is now within the lion's claws.

This emotion of Da Messina's sweetheart is fortunately unnoticed by Madame la contessa. Just at this moment, a cold shiver runs through her graceful limbs. She remembers she is now under the personal hand of Bolza, her passport bearing upon it no return permit.

With this, inspired by mortal fear, she looks at the handsome fellow sitting opposite to her, and says to herself these desperate words: "Now IT IS THY HEAD OR MINE!"

BOOK IV.

THE NAKED HANDS OF THE PEOPLE.

CHAPTER XV.

THE YOUNG LADY SMUGGLER.

Then, over dusty roads, for the season is quite well advanced, and the weather very warm for March, Da Messina and the ladies drive down the broad plains that lead to the Po, and soon, apparently forgetful of all save the lovely meadows through which they journey, get to chatting easily again.

A little time after this, just as they enter Vochera, Da Messina shouts with laughter at the antics of an Austrian cavalry recruit they encounter in the road, whose horse tries to unseat him and run away. For there is a good deal of the boy about this conspirator, and the human mind is wonderfully elastic, even under

the fear of death.

So they rumble along quite merrily, and, crossing the Po at Stradella, after a little stretch of level they rattle over the old bridge that spans the Ticmo, to arrive in Pavia, where, having time, they stroll back to the Pozzo, near the Ticino bridge, to take a hurried dinner, gazing at some passing barges in the river and a little, puffing steamboat, upon whose deck, to general astonishment, a man is smoking a pipe.

"Ghieu!" growls their waiter, under his breath, for he knows Pergolese by sight. "That scoundrel is a Scotch engineer, but we'll mob him to-night!"

This impresses the desperate feeling of the people on Estelle, but ever since they have been in Lombardy the evidences of political unrest have become more and more apparent. She has seen but few peasants working in the fields, though many, with frowning faces, lounge about each village *osteria*, and talk in low and sullen tones.

Approaching Pavia, the diligence has passed a number of strong patrols of cavalry, and two guns, apparently ready for action, have confronted them as they crossed the bridge over the Ticino.

At every place of importance their passports have been carefully re-scrutinized, and twice their baggage has been re-examined by officious customs inspectors, though no ferret of the lot seems to suspect the pretty child, who has sat so bashfully in the far corner of the coupé. One noticed that she trembled as he passed the coach; but, in his continental, official vanity, imagined that it was but the shyness of early maidenhood looking at a man of his extreme authority and power.

Likewise, Da Messina's charge has noted that, in great contradistinction to the puffing peasants of happier Piedmont, no Lombardian yokel has, between his bucolic teeth, pipe or cigarette. Now, in the streets of Pavia, she sees that no Italian, noble nor tradesman, has a cigar between his lips; likewise that the numerous students of the great universities are pipeless, though, as if in jeer of the misery patriotism has brought upon the worshipers of nicotine in this land, the Austrian officers strut about, ostentatiously puffing smoke into every Italian face, disdaining the awful warning in many of the insulteds' eyes.

As they finish dinner, Da Messina's brow becomes clouded. Twice since crossing the frontier, from force of habit, he has put his hand contemplatively into his pocket, to feel the absence of his cigar-case, and withdraw his fingers with a start. Missing the smoker's climax to this meal, he utters a subdued execration.

Estelle, whose eyes are ever on him, noticing his disappointment, whispers, sympathetically: "How will you bear the absence of your cigars to-morrow?"

"Peste! I must endure it," he answers, testily. "My discomfort is no greater than any other nonsmoking Italian in this unfortunate land:" and is rather astonished, as he rises to settle his score with mine host, and the ladies pass out in advance of him, to see Estelle nudge Eugenia and laugh quite merrily.

"It is some little pleasantry of my sweetheart's," he thinks, contentedly, and does not wonder at the intimacy that has grown up between the contessa and his protégée: for Eugenia's one aim since they left Marseilles has been to win the heart of Da Messina's ward.

Though the intrigante would have liked this handsome tenor's love well enough, she has deftly seen he has only eyes for his charming ward; therefore, with extreme tact, has made no attempt in a line that would have certainly brought upon her Estelle's suspicions. jealousy, and rage. Besides, she feels sure that she could lure no secret vital to his country's liberty from Pergolese, even if in his arms, and so has turned most of her allurements upon Estelle, whose jealous love for her padrone Eugenia determines shall be her weapon.

But, while trying to gain the good-will of the boundgirl, she is by no means averse to the padrone also thinking well of her; for in this lady spy's mind is now the despairing thought: "In three hours, Milano! There, if they bid me adieu, I am at the end of my rope, and then-Bolza!"

So, throughout this journey, she has been striving by every feminine art—and she has many—to win her companions to her, and succeeded well enough; for, as Pergolese strolls behind the ladies, he looks complacently on his ward's arm about Eugenia's waist, and even takes cognizance of the beauty of Signora di Vilermo, who, as she trips from the portico of the inn, has an aristocratic bearing, mingled with a very youthful and spirituelle grace.

"Cospetto! My lady would look well upon the stage!" he laughs to himself, as he overtakes his

charges.

They are soon in the diligence, which is now filled with passengers, for people think themselves as safe in one city of Lombardy as in another, Austrian troops being everywhere.

In proof of this, as they leave Pavia, by the Porta di Milano, they see to their right a brigade of white-coated infantry engaged in field maneuvers on the Piazza Castello.

Having engaged the whole of the *coupé*, though the *interieur* is crowded, Da Messina and his party journey quite privately.

As they approach the capital of Lombardy, the signs of an oppressed and discontented populace grow more and more distinct. Once, as they pause at a little village-smithy, one of the horses having thrown a shoe, they see three honest-looking *contadini* manacled and in charge of a squad of Austrian soldiers.

Most of the passengers are looking impatiently at the shoeing, but Da Messina, getting the chance of private word with a countryman, asks about this chaingang.

"They were arrested this morning, as they labored in their fields, and are now on their way to the galleys in Illyria, under that new law proclaimed last month by Radetzky—I can't master its foreign name, but it lets 'em shoot a man in two hours," whispers the rustic.

"Yes, the *Judicium Statuarium*," mutters il cavaliere. Then he asks, shortly: "For what crime?"

"How does anyone know?" answers the man. Then, doffing his hat, he whispers: "Pergolese, I say this in thy ear: they are like what people say thou art—that's all!" He shrugs his shoulders and turns away as Da Messina returns to the diligence.

As the coach rolls off, to the ladies' inquiries he tells them part of what he has heard, and can only partially conceal its effect upon himself.

After his outburst, he turns to Eugenia, and says, apologetically: "You, I hope, will pardon the agitation of an Italian, Madame la Comtesse, at the suffer-

ings of his countrymen. Of course, you being an Aus-

trian, scarcely appreciate my feelings."

The answer that comes astounds him. Eugenia whispers, as if afraid of being overheard: "My country is as oppressed by those white-coated fellows as is yours."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean-I am a Hungarian."

"Ah, yes! What lover of liberty has not heard of Kossuth, the coming man! Some day, we have hope——" But here Carlo prudently clenches his teeth and says no more, though this lady's acute remark has placed her much closer to him.

The three manacled men have likewise a tremendous effect upon Estelle. A violator of the law is generally timid. At the next posthouse, at change of horses, fearing that someone may smell tobacco upon her, though each cigar is carefully wrapped in tinfoil, the little smuggler, upon the excuse that she is too tired, declines her padrone's invitation for a stroll.

"But I am not!" cries la contessa, cheerfully, and wanders off by the side of the handsome tenor to make her plea, for a very curious idea is in this lady's mind, though just at present she does not think it wise to

more than hint at it.

As she walks along the dusty road with Pergolese, she suddenly inquires: "What do you intend to do with Estelle when we reach Milano?"

"I have already engaged apartments for her in the big, comfortable, old house of Madre Paolo Vicenza, Via Oriani, just back of La Scala."

"But I fear she will be lonely there-she knows no

one-and you, of course, will-"

"Will live at my old apartments in the Rebecchino. The restaurant below makes it convenient for me. Without a companion for Estelle, I should hesitate to occupy the same house with her, notwithstanding 'tis a padrone's custom."

Here Eugenia astonishes her escort. She asks: "Why shouldn't I be the companion, if not the chape-

rone, of your apprentice, whom you treat as your ward?"

"Sapristi!" replies Da Messina, a tinge of surprise upon his face. "I had supposed you left almost immediately for Trieste."

"Impossible," she replies, "if remittances are not awaiting me at Milano. You see, what little property I have is in Hungary. The coming outbreak there has perhaps ruined me." This is whispered almost under her breath.

"Yes, I have heard of that," replies Da Messina, a look of hope upon his face; for a blow to Austria is a blow for Italy. He is also very well aware that some ladies are always complaining about their finances. Therefore he adds: "Your own course must be your own option, Madame la Comtesse. As to your suggestion, I plainly tell you that, occupied as she will be with her lessons and her music, I shall permit no lady to be intimate with Estelle, unless she is so under my control and guidance that I can direct their friendship entirely."

At this uncompromising reply, the lady pouts: "Then I suppose I must stay at some hotel," and suddenly pleads, anxiously: "But you will let me visit one of whom I have grown to be very fond?"

Reflecting upon the loneliness that must come upon his betrothed, as he well knows that mighty events will soon keep him almost continuously from her society, Carlo answers politely, almost pressingly: "Any afternoon, immediately after four o'clock, for an hour, I shall be pleased to have you call upon my apprentice."

"Only for an hour?" La contessa's face grows wan. An hour a day is not enough for her design.

"Yes, for Estelle will be occupied with her music lessons. But our little lady is beckoning to us," rejoins il cavaliere, who has been looking over his shoulder at his betrothed's winsome face.

As they step into the coach, Estelle greets them with a smile. She has no jealousy of Eugenia; her heart

has no fear but for the great prima donna of La Scala, who once was her affianced's mistress.

Of this, the lady sitting by her side is very well aware, as she has, by various diplomatic allusions, kept Olinska *en cvidence*.

But Pergolese, not guessing this, looks on Madame Intrigante benignly.

Then, as a great city, with semi-medieval walls and bastioned gates, looms up in the distance before this wanderer returning to the land of his nativity, he says: "Il gran Milano!" and cries out to both ladies: "Here—see! The smoke of our woolen manufactories and silk mills! We shall be very shortly at the gates of my city. Behold our great il Duomo! You have never been in Milano before, Madame di Vilermo? Well, we have everything here—but happiness. Twelve crops of hay a year on our meadows; several editions of early vegetables; plenty of wine; an abundance of sheep; lots of silkworms. We have been stormed twenty-seven times and besieged forty-six times, and have always been reigned over by a tyrant from the time of Charlemagne!"

As they cross the darsena, he mutters: "Maledetto! Here are some of our rulers!" For, passing a canal, they are at the Ticinese gate, where their passports are again examined, and Da Messina's eager eyes see with concern that the sentries have not only been doubled, but that the Porta is garrisoned by three strong companies of infantry, ferocious Croats, who, in their undisciplined love of blood, booty, and beauty, are still sol-

diers of the Dark Ages.

Then they rumble off between high, old-fashioned houses, through the narrow and crooked streets of old-time Milan. For it was not till it became part of United Italy that the new, broad, straight, well-paved Corsos and magnificent Galleria Vittorio Emanuele were opened, which, together with the enlarging and

beautifying of the square of il Duomo, have made the city not only modern but cosmopolitan.

But, after passing some rather squalid buildings, which at that time almost abutted upon one side of the great cathedral, they turn into what is now called the Via Monte Napoleone, where the diligence office is located.

Here, as they stop, Estelle suddenly claps her hands, and cries: "Carlo, there is Captain Radetzky!"

And the young Austrian officer seizes and embraces

Da Messina before he can get out of the coach.

"Ach Gott! So glad to welcome you!" he cries. "I am well ahead of you. I have been here four days." Then, bowing to Estelle, he adds: "Thanks for your little note, Mademoiselle!" And, seeing Eugenia, he remarks, in laughing whisper, to Da Messina: "But you have another protégée—another apprentice?"

"No, my dear fellow, a lady to whom I offered escort to my city. La Contessa di Vilermo, permit me to present Captain Franz Paulus Radetzky, of the Regi-

ment Maria Theresa."

"Ah!" remarks Eugenia, putting pleasant eyes on this frank-faced, frank-voiced, young Austrian. "You—you are some relative of the Governor of Lombardy?"

"Yes, his nephew!" answers the young man,

proudly.

Then Pergolese interjects: "Franz, I will ask you a favor. Will you kindly escort Madame la Comtesse to her hotel? It is, I believe, the Grande Bretagne."

"Oh, yes; the Corso della Palla. I know the place very well," replies the Austrian. "But your address, my friend?"

"Oh, my apartments are at the Hotel Rebecchino, Via Santa Margherita. I keep them there by the year."

"And Mademoiselle's?" asks the captain.

"At No. 22 Via Oriani, Callers will be permitted

for one hour after four o'clock in the afternoon. You see, I am not secluding her like a novice, Franz; but she has a lot to do. She's got a voice worthy of work."

"Yes, and I've got a maestro who'll make me do it!" prattles Estelle, her eyes very bright as she foresees a

tête-à-tête with her padrone.

"But," remarks Radetzky, who has already picked out a carriage for la contessa, "you must dine with me this evening—I insist, Carlo."

"Yes, if you will let me select my own hour," an-

swers il cavaliere, heartily.

"Of course!"

"Then I name seven o'clock, and ask you where?"

"The restaurant at your hotel, the Rebecchino; you won't have far to go to-night, and I can see the journey has tired you, and, of course, fatigued the ladies," replies Radetzky, as la contessa makes her adieux, and he assists her into a carriage. Then the young Austrian officer's face grows haughty, and, gazing about him, he sneers: "These canaille seem to frighten our little friend."

For Estelle is gazing in amazed horror at the crowd of loungers standing about the diligence office. These, as her padrone has stepped out of the stage, have taken off their hats to him, bowed before him, and murmured, "Pergolese illustrissimo!" as if he were a god. But now, noticing his intimacy with the Austrian officer, they have clapped their hats upon their heads, and are snarling, almost threateningly: "Traditore!"

Even as il cavaliere places his ward in the carriage, and takes seat beside her, one fellow almost puts his head into the vehicle, and, nodding it back and forth, hisses: "Abasso tenore di Austria! Maladetto Pergolese!"

At these insults from the lips of those he loves, Da Messina turns pale, and Estelle, nestling to him as they drive away, sees on his face the agony of an overpowering shame.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ARMS IN THE HAY.

But, a moment after, the patriot says, determinedly: "Why should I care if I do my duty? Those gentlemen will some day see whether Pergolese is *traditore* or not!"

Then tossing the curls back from his forehead, and apparently throwing this matter from his mind. Carlo hastily tells his sweetheart his plans for her. "Originally it had been my intention to place you at the school of my aunt, Signora Giuseppina Bianchi, but now I hesitate to subject you to the severe discipline and hard work which there would certainly come to you. Besides, surrounded by a lot of girls, some apprentices, some pupils for pay, but all careless gossips, my visits to you, except when I gave you singing lessons, would bring embarrassment and comment upon you. Therefore, by letter, I have engaged some rooms for you with old Madre Paola Vicenza, an ex-maîtresse de ballet of La Scala. She has a big, comfortable, old house, just back of the theater. Age has made Paola a hag, but she was once celebrated, and has probably a few dancinggirls under her wing."

"You-you don't mean to put me with the balle-

rini?" asks Estelle, anxiously.

"Certainly not. You will be altogether by yourself. Old Madre Paola will do anything for Pergolese. You

will be treated in private as a princess."

"Ah, but I am not treated as a sweetheart," murmurs the girl, archly; then, after a little, fluttering struggle, cries: "Stop, Carlo mio! The—the people in the streets will see us!"

For their carriage is passing through the great Piazza il Duomo, which is now crowded by an afternoon Milanese throng; ladies going into the grand cathedral to make confession; shovel-hatted priests, and venders,

and hucksters of all kinds—that curious mixture of an Italian city in the days when the young nobles wore picturesque velvet coats; when the bandit, who had robbed Englis mi Lor' in the mountains, jostled with him in the public squares of Naples or Firenze—in short, the days of Fra Diavolo and Zerlina, of Carbonari and secret societies, whose weapon was the stiletto; those times so pleasant to read of, exciting on the stage, but perchance not so pleasant to live in; those days before the coming railroads brought modern life to a new Italia.

Still, the place is very bright and animated with that peculiar vivacity that makes Italian cities, even in their lowest quarters, seem theatrical and picturesque.

"Though no one smokes, they all look happy," whispers the girl; then adds, with feminine, quick judgment: "Pish! There's no rebellion in this town, mio

Pergolese!"

At this announcement, Da Messina gazes at her astounded; then replies, excitedly, but very cautiously: "No rebellion—when but six months since seven students were killed and thirty wounded in Pavia by those white-coated wretches! No rebellion—when scarce sixty days have passed since eight Milanese were killed and fifty mutilated for pulling the cigar out of an insolent soldier's teeth! No rebellion—when within the month four hundred of us were, without trial, sent to slave in the galleys or toil in the fleet of our tyrants! Corpo di Diavolo! Look at those two companies of infantry guarding his palace, and see if Radetzky thinks there is no rebellion in Milano!"

He points to the Palazzo di Corte, where, in the absence of his Emperor, the grim, old Austrian Governor sits like a watchdog looking over Lombardy.

But now they rush into a rather dark and narrow street, and soon after pass the *façade* of La Scala, where Estelle, looking at the announcements, gives a little, frightened shudder, for she sees posted up, "OLINSKA—NORMA—WEDNESDAY!" and feels she is

face to face with her hated rival. But, scarce a second after, she cries: "Oh, your name, Pergolese—for Sunday evening in 'Lucia'! You sing 'Edgardo'!" and, putting pleading eyes upon him, falters: "I—I shall

hear you?"

"Cospetto, you shall, little one! If I can not arrange with some fine lady to take you in her box, you shall come with me, and stand within the wings. You see, I had given my word to Zirconi, the manager, when I left, that I would sing for him immediately upon my return, and he has already remembered it. But here we are at what I hope will be a pleasant resting place for you, anima mia." For their carriage has driven from the Via San Giuseppe into the Via Oriani.

From here they would turn into the courtyard of a building that had once been some old palace, did not a

red-shirted doorkeeper cry: "Arrestare!"

"Oh, yes!" remarks Pergolese. "I presume madames does not want her ballet-girls gadding about the streets, and keeps this fellow as a kind of Cerberus."

After a moment's explanation, they drive past the man, to find themselves in a flagged courtyard, from which entrance is made to the upper floors of the building. Being met at the massive, old-time door, with its strong bolts and gigantic lock, they are escorted by a stalwart, Italian serving-girl, whom Pergolese calls Josepha. This abigail seems to know the tenor very well, for she walks, smilingly, in front of them, chattering: "So this is thy pretty, little canary bird! We have a pleasant cage for her! Numo, of the Marionettes, his family, and also Madame Cavello left for Naples, fearing coming trouble—so we are empty," and on the second floor shows them into a spacious parlor, from which opens a roomy, yet dainty, chamber, both very pleasantly lighted, as they front upon the street.

Here Estelle claps her hands and looks with grateful eyes upon her padrone, for she sees preparations have been made for her. A grand piano, already opened; a pile of sheet music, some opera scores, and quite a

library, including even the novels of the day; a porcelain stove, in which the fire is burning briskly; a lot of rugs thrown over the floor; some pretty bronzes, and two or three pictures, that are little masterpieces of Italian art. "I had these sent over from my own apartments," remarks her betrothed, in answer to her glance.

But she has caught sight of a vase, bearing a great bunch of early roses, and is crying: "For me, Carlo mio—for me?"

"Yes, everything for thee!" he whispers.

At this strange intimacy between bound-girl and padrone, Josepha opens her eyes; but, being wise after the manner of her class, courtesies, and says: "I will call Mother Vicenza."

As the door closes, Estelle flies into her lover's arms, and murmurs: "Oh, thank you! Thank you! But still, thou art cruel."

"And why?"

"As yet not one kiss in my new home."

"Cospetto, but I am a villain!" he laughs, and thereafter his betrothed has no cause for complaint.

A moment after, he seats her tenderly upon a sofa, and takes a step or two about the room, as if in meditation, once abstractedly putting his hand to where his cigar-case should be, and withdrawing it with so unhappy a face that his sweetheart gives a sudden chuckle.

But, pausing in his step, he speaks to her very gently, but quite commandingly: "Now I shall have lots to keep you busy. This is what I have planned for thee: Baptiste shall give you instruction with the foils; Roncono shall teach you the piano and harmony; Old Mother Paola shall show you enough dancing to give you grace and dramatic gesticulation; Madame Pacini will run over for an hour each day to make you an actress."

"And you—what will you do for me, mio padrone?" returns Estelle.

"Oh, I shall teach thy pretty voice il bell canto. At least an hour a day I shall hear thy exercises."

"Only an hour a day? Madre mia!" cries the girl.

"But I shall come to you whenever it is possible, though I have lots to do—arrangements with the impresario and rehearsal. God knows what may come upon Pergolese!" he exclaims, for he dare not tell her that it is very different matters that will take him from her side. "And now," he says, "I must bid you adieu."

"So soon?" she falters, and the plaint that he has

feared comes to him from her imploring eyes.

"Yes, I have something important enough to even take me from your side; but this evening I will come to you at half-past six. Besides, your eyes tell me that

you are tired from your journey."

He rings a bell, and to his call comes in the lady of the house—a great, tall, gaunt, Neapolitan woman, with eyes as black as coals, and hair that has grown into an iron-gray which suits her iron frame; for Paola, even in her middle age, is lithe as a cat, and powerful as a panther.

"You will excuse my tardiness, maestro," she says, returning a courtesy for his bow. "One of my balletgirls just fell at her exercise, and sprained her knee. Welcome from Paris, where, I am told, they have run their king away. We may do a little of that kind of business ourselves some day. Your letter got to me, and I hope you are satisfied, though you apparently demanded apartments for a princess." She gives a grin as Estelle is introduced to her.

"You will take care of this song-bird of mine! Just teach her enough of thy art, dear Mother Paola, to give Mademoiselle the graces of the stage," remarks Pergolese.

"Ah, yes! It is a song-bird always now," says the dancer, bitterly. "But, ten years ago, when Taglioni got greater hire than any singer of you all, it was not all song-birds; it was sylphs, and nymphs, and dancing

fairies. But you have turned your back upon ballet, as well as the rest of the world, Pergolese. Still, for you—Italia's friend—I am your humble servant, and the young lady's, though it is a curious thing to make a princess of a bound-girl."

"Ah, yes; but wait till you hear her sing!"

"Gran Dio! I can see she has sung herself into your heart!" laughs the woman; at which Estelle blushes beautifully. But suddenly her eyes grow troubled, for La Vicenza snorts, in affable comment: "Diavolo! What will la diva over there"—she nods toward La Scala—" say to a child rival!" and laughingly goes off, leaving Pergolese biting his lip, and his affianced with a tear in her bright eyes.

Noticing this, Da Messina steps straight to Estelle, and says, almost sternly, yet oh, how tenderly: "My own! I have torn this lady's picture out of my watch; believe me, dear one, she was never really in my heart. Pay no heed to the gossips of this place. Sapristi! The chorus of La Scala would give Pergolese a new amour-

ette every day."

"I won't, mio Carlo," she says, in simple determination. "Your every action since I gave my lips to you has proved to me that you loved me. Take them again, to know that I have faith in you!" Her soft arms close round his neck; her sweet lips tell him that she believes.

So, after a moment, he tears himself from her; and his bound-girl, running to the window to catch view of her padrone as he walks along the street, devours his figure till he turns a corner.

Then she, loneliness coming to her, sighs: "He—he never looked back to see if I was gazing after him!"

But here her young eyes catch, through a narrow opening in the houses, one tower of that great building, erected by Visconti, and now used as a barracks by the Austrians, called the Castello. Above it floats the double-eagled banner of the Empire. Beyond is the great, green field of the Piazza d'Armi. Upon this are

three brigades of white-coated soldiers—Croats—executing their maneuvers; but these do not interest her very much, though, perchance, they might frighten her did she know they are drilling with ball-cartridges.

Then the sight of Austrian power reminds her; she laughs: "I forgot I was a smuggler!" and runs to her dainty bedroom, where, seeing another vase of fresh cut flowers, she goes to them and kisses them. A moment after, locking the door, she pulls off a heavy underskirt, works diligently at it, and cries: "Ninety-five are all right for Pergolese!" and pouts: "Five have been ruined by my sitting on them!" These she tosses into the fire, but puts away very carefully in her trunk, which she finds is already in her room, the ninety-five consolers for her patriot.

Then she rings a bell, and Josepha, bustling in, says: "Would you like some dinner, Mademoiselle? He

ordered it for you before he went away."

"No, nothing now; I am too tired. But don't fail to call me at half-past six, for then he will be here again!" So, hastily disrobing, this bound-girl slips her exquisite body between the white sheets of a dainty bed, puts her fair head upon soft pillows, edged with lace, as if for a princess's slumbers, and goes to sleep, to

dream of Pergolese.

Perchance her dreams would not be so pleasant did she know the business her lover is engaged in. For, after making the many maneuvers of a man who fears a spy is always at his elbow—at one time passing through buildings that lead from one street to another, and waiting to see if anyone is following him; and at others suddenly retracing his steps quickly to catch a careless pursuer—Carlo finds himself in the dark entrance of an ancient house in the very densest part of old Milan.

The door of this is not opened till he has given three very peculiar salutes. Entering, he encounters, in the long passageways of the old Palazzo, a dozen loungers, every one of whom gives him the grip of Young Italy.

Did he not return it, a dozen knives would be in him in a second. But, recognizing him, his inquisitors take off their hats quite reverently.

So he passes on, and, being cautiously admitted to a dingy room, three men spring up to meet him with a cry of joy! Two of them, apparently by their dress, are of the nobility; the other, a dogged, white-haired, snarling creature of almost seventy years, wears a semimilitary costume, and, by his bearing, accent, and demeanor, indicates that he was an old officer of the Republic, when France, under Bonaparte, dominated Europe.

Immediately Carlo enters, the door is quickly closed and locked, and heavy curtains are drawn over it. Then they seize Pergolese, and tender him the cautious greeting that men under fear of death give to one another.

"Now," hastily says il Conte Gabrio Casati, the Podesta of Milan: "Da Messina, never mind details; give us the vital point of your journey!"

"The arms will be here by the 20th!"

At this the two Italians give a sigh of relief, and the younger, the gallant Luciano Manara, cries: "Thank God!"

"How many?" asks the old republican officer, sharply.

"Twelve thousand—two hundred rounds of ammunition to each musket."

"How in the name of the Goddess of Reason will

you get them here?" snarls the Frenchman.

"Concealed in hay-wagons, driven from the meadows of Tortone, passing the frontier without customs examination, because each one will be protected by the placard of the Austrian quartermaster of the Fourth Hussars. Each wagon, on passing our frontier, will be guarded by Austrian troops; but each wagon will be driven by one who can be trusted. Foscari, a farmer of that district, and a true lover of liberty, made the contract under my directions. I had arranged the matter with him, likewise with our agents in Genoa, on

my way to France. These wagons will be driven so as to arrive at nightfall in this city on the 20th. They will enter by the Porta Tosa. They will be drawn up, only when it is too late to unload them, before the barracks of the Fourth Hussar Regiment. Then, during the night, we will take quiet charge of them."

"But, heavens and earth!" cries Manara. "If the horses of the Austrian escort want hay on the journey?"

"That is arranged for. We have one wagon that carries no arms. The drivers are instructed to so arrange that the Austrians will take hay from no other wagon. In addition, only the very center of each load contains arms. Each package of muskets or ammunition is bound up in hay. Besides, this country hay—innocent hay—is piled in bales all around them. The troopers of the escort will have to make a much closer investigation than pulling a few bunches of fodder out of any wagon to discover what they are convoying to Milan. I think I have worked out the matter quite thoroughly," remarks Da Messina.

"Diavolo, with the astuteness of genius!" cries

Luciano.

"Tonnerre de Dieu! You fixed the trick with that boldness that makes security! Diable! In old times, our Little Corporal would have clapped you on the back!" growls the old republican.

"Thank you, Colonel Labat," smiles Carlo. "A word of praise from your experienced lips was more

than I ever expected to gain."

"Sacré bleu!" chuckles the old revolutionaire. "I had never expected to say so much for you, my high-

screeching patriot. But to work!"

On this—with the care of men who are arranging a movement upon which not only their lives depend, but perhaps even the honor of their wives and daughters, for God knows what will happen if they suffer defeat—these patriots make plans for throwing off the Austrian yoke on the night of the 20th of March. In this they are deftly aided by the snarling counsels of the old

republican soldier, who, having fought behind many barricades and in numerous street mêlées in the days of the Revolution, knows this business to perfection.

"We must strike before morning on the 21st!" remarks Casati. "Otherwise the Austrians will guess

what we are doing."

With this, they arrange that ten wagons are to be hurried to the students' quarter, five to the woolen mills, and ten to the silk manufacturers' district; and, the others properly distributed, a sufficient detail of men to go with each of them, and that each section, headed by its leader, shall act according to a plan to be formulated in the coming two weeks, this Monday being the 6th of March.

For these leaders of the Milanese had not the crazy thought, of which they have been accused, of sending up their townsmen with naked hands against the Austrian bayonets. That came afterward—an inspiration

born of their despair!

CHAPTER XVII.

THE THREE TEMPTATIONS.

Just out of the Via Santa Margherita, where now the magnificent Galleria Vittorio Emanuele is located, in 1848, stands a pile of medieval buildings, entered by a narrow alley, which terminates in a courtyard. Gloomy in themselves, the Milanese pass by them as if they dreaded them, for they are the *Direzioni Generale di Polezia*, the headquarters of Austrian police espionage of the city of Milan and Lombardy.

Though well guarded by a detail of sentries, a company of infantry being stationed in the building, they are, at a little after nine o'clock this evening, very still. Everything about them seems to move with that quiet,

official bureaucracy, indicative of a power so great it needs no outward show.

Into their courtyard, draped as closely as an odalisque, with thick, Spanish veil drawn over her shapely head, la Contessa di Vilermo glides. She gives a whispered word to the sentry, and he permits her to pass him, to encounter a police sergeant. A moment after, she is conducted to a well-remembered door in the façade of the courtyard, and her hand trembles as she lifts the old-fashioned knocker. To her rapping, this portal is very quickly opened.

As she enters, a confidential official, out of uniform, says, suavely: "Madame la Comtesse is expected," and shows her up a flight of stairs to the private office of il Conte Bolza, the most hated, yet the most feared, man in Lombardy. His master, the old Austrian general of iron nerve, Radetzky, will crush the enemies of his Emperor openly like a warrior; this underling will strike in the dark like a brayo.

But men often belie their appearance. Dressed accurately in official evening costume, with knee breeches, silk stockings, court swallow-tail coat, and patent leather, red-heeled shoes, surmounted by gleaming, golden buckles, Bolza looks more of the olden than of the modern time; and his police administration is the same.

His forehead is quite broad, his cheeks rather white, his lips very thin but highly colored, and his manner diplomatic. He would be thought a quiet gentleman of the ancient régime did not serpent's eyes, black and beady in repose, but, when excited, gleaming red, like glowing charcoal, make him appear as deadly as that dread snake of Martinique, whose unclosing orbs glow night and day with the red light of danger.

He rises on Eugenia's entrance, and bows courteously, saying, in soft, cold tones: "So pleased to see you! You were expected. I have some communications about you, not only from Benuchio, in France, but from Donetto, in Genoa. Please take off your wraps, Con-

tessa—I like to study my subjects—then tell to me your story."

He sits down at his desk, and, a moment after, la contessa, standing before him, relates everything she knows or guesses about Da Messina, and, as she closes,

finds Bolza is not pleased with her tale.

"Peste!" he says, testily. "What you relate to me is nothing—only a few suspicions, surmises, guesses! Besides, this Pergolese, I have been told by Captain Radetzky, of the General Staff, is a very fine fellow—a friend, perchance, of Austria. He saved, at his own great risk, the life of an Austrian officer in the Saone. He has not that implacability to those wearing our uniforms that the so-called patriots of this country have. Diavolo! he is even now dining with Franz Radetzky, over there at the Rebecchino! In addition, the two young men embraced each other at the general diligence office this afternoon."

"Oh, but—Your Excellency," urges Eugenia, "I know there is something wrong about Pergolese—"

"Because at sea his trembling apprentice whispered she was afraid of an Austrian court-martial? Ach Gott, some other ladies are afraid of Austrian au-

thority!"

He gives a grin, which makes la contessa tremble, and continues, sneeringly: "What you tell me of the opera house at Genoa was, of course, reported by Donetto. But it is nothing; an Italian mob are always ready to cry 'Viva Garibaldi!' and 'Evviva l'Italia!' Then, at Tortone, this Pergolese went into an osteria to get a glass of wine! At how many other places on the route did the tenor grow thirsty?"

"About four or five other places," admits Signora di Vilermo. "But this was before we reached the fron-

tier. Besides, his apprentice---"

"Oh, yes; his apprentice slipped on some cabbage leaves in the street, while some farmers were talking of hay! That is so unusual for farmers—to talk of

hay. Gott in Himmel! They generally talk of nothing

else! Ah, Madame, you fatigue me so!"

Then the snake's eyes begin to flame; his voice becomes squeaky, like an overstrained violin string; he twangs at the almost fainting culprit: "Two years ago, when your husband was sent in perpetuity to the galleys, you, in my presence in Trieste, confessed thyself guilty of false bills of exchange. I have given you two chances to atone for thy crimes, and how have you done it? In Turin, on some silly matter of private virtue, you refused to give your arms to that Sardinian marquis, and we missed information of great value. In this, your second case, you have done nothing—nothing!" He sounds a bell.

"Oh, God of Heaven!" she bursts out. "Your Ex-

cellency, I implore you, don't-"

"Oh, yes! But I must—my matron, Bettina, is waiting for you. There is a little, white cell ready for

you in the rear of the building."

"Give me time!" gasps the woman, in a conglomerate sob and scream. "Just give me time! I feel sure that the arms are coming by the frontier! Oh, give me time to betray this conspirator into your hands! No scruples shall come between me and my duty to you. If he asks my love, he shall have it."

The little door behind her autocrat's back is opening—the one to the right. A dark-frocked, red-eyed woman, of herculean figure and forbidding mien, is

entering.

"Oh, madre di Dio! Give me time, and I will go into the fire to discover!" shrieks Eugenia, sinking on

her knees.

"Then, ten days!" he says, shortly, and, waving his

hand, the woman silently disappears.

Raising la contessa politely, Bolza remarks: "If not before, in ten days I shall expect Madame. In case you have to write your information, address me, as usual, to the hand of Enrico Donetto. And, mark me, under no circumstances permit Da Messina to guess he is sus-

pected, or know that you are my agent;" adding, with a smile that makes her tremble: "Empfehle mich Ihnen!" and, with this suave, Austrian, diplomatic phrase, sounds another bell, and has his shivering culprit spy shown out, metaphorically scourged to her work.

Glancing after Eugenia, Bolza remarks: "Verflucht! In her despair she'll find out something for me! If the arms are coming that way? Yet I should be sorry; I hate to slay so fine a voice. Mein Gott, how beautifully this Pergolese sang 'Ernani' at La Scala the last time I listened to him! Oh, it is hard to have an artistic soul, and to be Minister of Police in Italy! If you haven't got a singer under your hands, you have a painter, sculptor, or composer. Verdammt! There are too many artists who call themselves patriots in Lombardy and Venetia! Just the same, that little, trembling criminal, la contessa, is frightened enough to walk into Hades to get this tenor's secret, if he has any."

Quite curiously, just about this time, the lady of Bolza's words has determined to place herself in a position that will be Hades to her haughty, yet pernicious, spirit, to gain a secret she imagines Pergolese holds.

"If I can get information that permits Austria to seize arms coming to these conspirators, Bolza must pardon me!" she falters; then reflects, rapidly: "An hour a day to call upon Estelle, for ten days; that will be all I'll have—ten hours! Interrupted by other visitors—that Austrian officer, for instance—I shall have neither time nor opportunity to reach the bottom of my jealous bound-girl's heart. But with her every day—alone together—a member like herself of Pergolese's artistic family—"

She is passing the Rebecchino. Glancing up, she chances to see through one of its lighted windows Da Messina and Radetzky, chatting over their dinner.

"A light-hearted, easy-going young fellow, that Austrian!" thinks la contessa; then studies his compan-

ion's face more carefully. "He doesn't look so very awful," she half laughs. "And yet Estelle's cries were very piteous that night! But since then he has been kind enough to the minx, even better than she deserved." Then her brow contracts, as if contemplating some unpleasant proposition. She shudders: "O Madre Doloroso! I hate to give anyone such absolute power over me; to throw myself in the dust before him; to bind my will to his! But it is that or Bolza, and I will take the chance."

And an idea, that has been drifting in and out of the subtle brain of the lady, assuming exact form, she kisses her hand mockingly toward Pergolese, and murmurs, imitating Estelle's caress: "Mio padrone!" then, laughing, calls a cab and drives to her hotel to make her preparations for the morrow.

The two young men Eugenia has been inspecting are seated quite comfortably over a very elaborate dinner in the restaurant almost across the Via Margherita from the Austrian Office of Police; for Franz's hospitality is boundless for this Italian he considers his preserver.

Their meal has been a pleasant one. They have conversed as intimates on every subject but politics. Radetzky now brings up the subject of his introduction to Sophie Olinska, whom he seems very anxious to meet. "Ach Gott, she is beautiful as a dream!" he cries. "Three evenings ago I heard her as 'Linda.' How prettily innocent she looked as a Swiss peasant girl!"

At this suggestion of Sophie's innocence, Da Messina stifles a grin, for the lady under discussion is generally considered as astute and naughty a sinner as ever stepped the opera boards, and that's saying sufficient for any woman. Apparently not very eager in the matter, the Italian asks: "You are very anxious to meet her, Franz?"

"Great heavens, mein freund! It is the wish of my existence!" cries the German.

At this, Carlo considers a moment, and then, as if

making up his mind to a line of action, says: "In that case, I will do it for you."

"Thank you a thousand times, my comrade! From the boxes I have grown to love the lady. It is an agreement. We will some evening give her a pretty, little entertainment!" cries the Austrian, and thus settles a matter in which Da Messina is by no means anxious to engage.

Half divining Estelle is still jealous of the beautiful prima donna, Carlo doesn't wish to give the heart he loves a single pang. Still, with the confidence of man, he thinks, lightly: "Pish! My little darling will never know! Besides, I now care no more for Olinska than she does for me—which is nothing. Then introducing Franz to Sophie will be such a graceful retirement."

As Pergolese reflects, the young Austrian officer breaks hastily in: "I know it seems strange to you that I, Captain Radetzky, on the Governor's staff, living at the Palazzo Reale, have not yet obtained introduction to a prima donna of the opera."

"Not at all," replies Carlo. "It is because you are what you are that social success in Milan is so difficult to you. But I think I can arrange the matter to you liking. La belle Sophie is a Pole. Had she been Italian, the affair, in the unfortunate attitude the Milanese bear to those wearing Austrian uniforms had been well-nigh impossible.* But my little fête to la diva on the first convenient evening, will give you your opportunity, and I wish you every success."

"You—you are not in love with her, you are sure?" asks Franz, rather dubiously, for he has heard many stories of Pergolese and Olinska.

"Not the slightest!" laughs Da Messina. "Madame Gerome, our second contralto, is a French woman, and

^{*&}quot;No social intercourse took place between the Austrians and the nobility. Milan society was gay and brilliant, but if any Austrian officer or official was admitted to a ball at the house of a Milanese nobleman, his host knew well that he would have to retire to his country-seat, as none of his friends in Milan would continue to visit him."—Vide, Italy in the Nineteenth Century.—ED,

very agreeable company. She'll be happy, I have little doubt, to complete the quartet of our supper. After that, from your Vienna experience, my gallant, I imagine you know the way to a lady's heart."

About this time, they having reached their cheese and coffee, Radetzky, producing a cigar-case, says: "It is impossible at present to get decent cigars in this town. Francesci, down below, snarls at me when I order them, though I have been his very good customer. Permit me to offer you a very fine Havana, imported by my uncle, who is rather a connoisseur in these matters."

But the cavaliere, conquering an awful longing, says, stoutly: "My dear fellow, permit me to refuse it."

"Gott in Himmel! You smoked like a steam engine

in Lyons!"

"Yes; but in Milan—of course you understand—if I were seen smoking here—Diavolo!—I don't think the gallery at La Scala would let me sing on Sunday night!" half jeers Pergolese, a kind of reflective misery upon his face. He is thinking: "If twelve hours' abstinence gives me the longing of Tantalus, what will

my sufferings be to-morrow?"

"Well, since you won't smoke, neither will I!" laughs Franz. "The way I should enjoy this Bouquet de la Reina would torture you." With the instinct of a gentleman and a host, Radetzky replaces the cigars in his case, and then speaks more seriously: "I know, Carlo, what you sacrifice in being comrade to one who wears my uniform. Your relatives and friends will probably think you half Austrian. Did you notice, at the office of the diligence, how those fellows who were bowing to you; as they saw me embrace you, suddenly put on their hats, and growled out: 'Traditore!' and 'Abasso Pergolese'?"

"Yes, I understand that thoroughly," replies Da Messina. Then, following an audacious policy he had outlined for himself, the effects of which were to be even more potent than he guesses, he adds: "But I prefer your friendship, my dear fellow, to the adula-

tions of those patriots who fawn on me one moment and would stone me the next!"

"Yes, hang the canaille, how they frightened your little Estelle! She seems to have a great esteem for you. You think the little maiden will be happy here?"

"Yes. The only thing I fear is that, situated as she must be, Estelle may be lonely," returns Da Messina, sadly. "That came to me as I left her this evening. She is in a great, big house, and no one near her she would care to make companion."

"We will all call upon mademoiselle when she is not busy at her singing. Madame la Comtesse, who seems very fond of her, says she will visit Estelle on the hour you permit to-morrow," goes on the genial German, and innocently puts a pleasant nail in Eugenia's coffin.

As he speaks, he catches Da Messina stifling a yawn, and, springing up, says: "Forgive me! Mein Gott, I am keeping you up with my chatter! I forgot you had been traveling in a diligence all night. Please remember your promise as to Sophie, auf widersehen, mein lieber freund!" With this, embracing his companion, the young officer goes clattering down the stairs.

As Franz's military spurs ring upon the polished, oaken steps, the conspirator, from very fatigue, almost staggers to his chamber.

He had slept little the night before in the diligence, likewise he had hardly touched pillow in Genoa; for, while Eugenia thought him in his room, he had been in consultation all through the night with the agents of the Patriot Committee.

But, after getting to his bed, though exhausted nature demands her meed, Carlo is restless. Tossing on his pillow, he wonders what the deuce is the matter with him, then suddenly yawns: "Corpo di—di Bac—cho, I know! I'd give my head for just one—one whiff of a cigar!"

Then, to forget the weed, he begins to think of his sweetheart. "If I could give my darling my compan-

ionship, she would be content," he sighs. "But in this tremendous epoch, with so much upon me, I fear she'll think I neglect her, and become lonely almost to homesickness."

On the morrow, as he surmises, even greater events than he expected keep him from Estelle. It is the 8th of March, and Count O'Donnel, an Irish soldier of fortune in the Austrian service and Vice-Governor of Lombardy, announces the Emperor's concessions to the Milanese; and these not being at all to their liking, Pergolese, together with their other leaders, has an all-day's work to keep the town from rising, while as yet they have no arms for patriot hands.

Occupied by this duty, which is more arduous because every movement must be made secretly, Da Messina does not reach the Via Oriani till seven in the

evening.

Admitted by the porter into the courtyard, he strides up the great, stone stairway, and walks through the big, bare, cheerless halls of the old palazzo to the parlor of his betrothed. Here, though the lamps are lighted, the fire burning brightly, and all very comfortable and cheerful, he finds a white-robed child-Niobe seated on a sofa, with Italian grammar fallen from her hand, and eyes red, voice husky, and cheeks pale and tear-stained.

"San Marco!" he snarls. "Has anyone dared to be

unkind to thee?"

"None have been unkind to me but—but you!" she sobs. "I—I was crying because you came not to me."

"You received my bouquet and note?"

"Yes—yes! But they were not you!" Then her eyes grow bright at his caresses; and she pleads: "No lesson for a little while, padrone mio!" and laughs: "I will be a tyrant to you! A child in public, I demand a child's rights in private."

With this, pulling him to an armchair, she makes him seat himself in it, and nestles on his knee. "Yes," she goes on, "everyone came to give me lessons except you; though "—here she laughs a little, for in his presence she has regained her spirits—"they all thought me such a precocious child. Mother Vicenza and the fencing-master declared I was wonderfully developed for my tender age; and Madame Pacini, when I declaimed to her, said that I had the passion of a woman; and I—I think so, too!" She nestles her blushing head against Da Messina's shoulder, and clasps him with her tender arms very tightly. "Yes, all came to me but you. And now you say I have spoiled my voice by tears!" She looks archly at him, and pouts: "You are bad-tempered, my non-smoking patriot!" then adds, in a sneaking whisper: "But I have an antidote for nervous, nicotine irritability."

With this, she points a white finger to the mantelpiece, and Da Messina sees a little glass containing three tinfoiled cylinders that horrify him, for they seem to him—cigars!

He puts her out of his arms, and springs to the mantelpiece. A single sniff at them, and he turns upon Estelle, growling: "Don't dare to tempt me!"

"Pish! You needn't look so fiercely at me!" she laughs. "You can smoke these, and still be a patriot!"

"Impossible!"

Her lips speak to his ear: "Those paid no duty to the Austrian crown."

"What in Heaven do you mean?"

"I mean that when you told me in Genoa that cigars which had paid no tribute were no harm to patriots, I said: 'A little present to mio padrone, when lack of nicotine in his system makes him too savage with his boundgirl.' That's why I grabbed those six pieces of gold out of your purse." Then, in faltering tones, with appealing gestures, and apologetic manner, the dainty smuggler, with one or two subdued snickers, whispers to Da Messina of her evasion of the Austrian duties.

To this he listens, his face growing pale, and, as she closes, says, in anxious voice: "If they had caught you, child, a year's imprisonment!" Then, this touching his heart, as it would that of any smoker deprived of what he loves, Da Messina looks at her very lovingly, and asks: "And you took this risk for my sake, little one?"

"Oh, I'd risk my life for you, and you know it!" she whispers, stoutly. "But if you want to show your gratitude, please smoke just—just a whiff, to make me know I am forgiven. Expecting thee, I have pulled down the blinds, and have put paper wads in the keyholes. No one shall think Pergolese aught but a patriot; and yet he shall have the pleasures of an Austrian tyrant."

"Girl, do not tempt me!" he says, very sternly. "If anyone should see me, I would be disgraced forever with my kindred and my nation. I have taken enough

upon myself in being friend to Franz."

But, as he speaks, he paces up and down before the cigars, like a shark about his prey, and a smiling fairy archly watches him.

Finally he picks one up.

"If he gets real scent of it, he is lost!" she chuckles; and, springing to his side, pulls off the tinfoil that keeps the aroma from his nostrils. "It's a beauty, isn't it? I'll—I'll bite the end off it—for thee!"

"Quick! Sing for me thy exercise!" he commands,

as if to fight away the temptation.

"Yes, but first I'll bite the end off," she laughs; and does so. "That ought to taste very sweet to a lover," she remarks, placing it in Pergolese's hand. Then, stepping to the piano, Estelle trills the notes out like a canary bird.

As she finishes, "Bravo! Bravo! Bravissimo!" is whispered behind her ear, accompanied by three puffs of smoke, which, coming over her white shoulder, float

out in rings before her.

"I knew it!" she cries, clapping her hands. "You would never praise me like that unless tobacco had taken the bear out of you!"

"Diavolo, it was from very force of habit!" he says, sheepishly. "As I listened, I forgot all else except thy

glorious voice." But here he puffs another ring or two out of his mouth, and whispers, with hoarse eagerness: "How many boxes?"

"Excuse me-you are killing me with laughter!"

"How many boxes?"

"Two boxes-ninety-five cigars. I broke the other five by sitting on them, when you drove me wild by saving I was vain of-of my ankles. Old Mother Vicenza, as I danced to-day, said—but never mind what old Vicenza said," she mumbles, getting very red in the face. "There are only ninety-five-I mean ninetyfour- Gracious, how fast you smoked it!"

"Ninety-four! Twelve days from now!" mutters Carlo, consideringly. "Then there are enough!"

At this, Estelle, who has a very quick wit, remembering when the English tradesman was to deliver the arms, begins to tremble; but Da Messina, who is now fondling another cigar, doesn't notice it, and remarks: "I'd like, if I dared, to give away some of these to poor Manara. Luciano is so miserable he sneaks off to the country, and smokes bark in his despair—a despair from which you have kept me, my dear, thoughtful one!"

"Well, since you are amiable and normal again, please light that other cigar, while I ask you a favor. I—I am very lonely here——"

"Yes—yes!" he breaks in. "I sometimes feared that might be——"

"The days would seem short were you always by me," she remarks. "But I know-that is impossible now. Well, the day went quite well for me, until four o'clock. I worked hard at my lessons. My instructors came regularly - all but one! Eugenia came, and Franz. But Franz went in fifteen minutes or so. He said there had been a great commotion in the streets. I think the Austrian officers are much worried at the attitude of the populace."

"Yes-yes! But your favor?"

"Eugenia stayed with me the hour that you permit,

and when she went away, I waited for you and waited for you; and oh, how dreary this great, deserted house felt to me, where I am treated like a princess, and envy the chattering ballet-girls of old Vicenza, as they romp about up-stairs; who, though they sometimes squeal under their padrona's cane, seem to me to be as merry as their tongues are long!"

"Yes-but this favor?"

"Now, Eugenia has been very unfortunate, and tomorrow will have something to ask. If you grant it, it will be more than a favor to me. When she asks you, think of my loneliness. She has already had a chat with Mother Vicenza, who says she'll make a graceful dancer."

"What enigma is on thy pretty lips?" Estelle has come out with Da Messina to say adieu in the hallway.

"Signora di Vilermo wishes to be your apprentice, and I wish it, too!"

At this extraordinary suggestion Carlo emits a prolonged and astonished whistle, and after a moment remarks: "You desire a maid?"

"No, a companion. Under this arrangement, Eugenia would be no bar to our tête-à-têtes. She could learn dancing under Vicenza, and I could have her near me when I pleased. She has been ruined by those horrid Magyar patriots. She is almost, Carlo—Mon Dieu!—destitute. You told her you would permit no woman to be intimate with me, unless you controlled her actions. You see, I promised to plead her cause for her. Now I'll wipe your mustache with a little cologne, so you can have the breath of a patriot," she laughs. "Go and ask Paola, and see if Eugenia will cost you money."

So he strolls carelessly away to the room of Madre Vicenza, where he queries: "Can you so arrange her exercises that the lady coming to you to-day, to ask your advice as to dancing, can be taken to Estelle whenever she desires her company?"

"Of course I can," replies Paola. "Only you get that beauty for me. She has been wonderfully taught in early youth. Diavolo, with my training, in a week I can make her a coryphee; in a month, a secondo; in a year—the devil knows what! • For she will look so pretty in dancing togs that half the gallants in Italy will be running after her."

Returning from this to Estelle, who has been waiting for him in the hallway, she asks, anxiously: "Can't

you arrange the matter?"

"Perhaps! I'll think about it."

"Then remember this," she says to him, quite pleadingly; "if you grant Eugenia's plea, you will not find me in tears when you come next time, which will be soon, I imagine, as I have cigars within my house. Won't you light one to smoke as you go home?"

"Gran Dio! I should be mobbed in the street!"

"But they are very fine ones, anyway! Eugenia helped me smuggle them. That should make you grateful to her. Think of that when she asks, and don't imagine Estelle will not like it, for she will, and will give you a lot of kisses for it—and cigars!" This last is a whisper, as she tears herself from Da Messina's arms, and runs back into the parlor.

"Cospetto! Eugenia helped my darling smuggle!" laughs the conspirator, as he paces home through the excited streets of this Italian city getting ready for revolt. "Besides, Estelle likes la contessa. This, in her

loneliness, may be a good arrangement for her."

These considerations make him quite pliable to the Austrian spy when she calls upon Da Messina the following morning.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SOME CURIOUS NEWS FROM ENGLAND.

At nine o'clock the next morning, il Cavaliere da Messina is seated at his breakfast table, languidly looking over some journals, local and foreign. Under a strict censorship, the Milan newspapers contain but little

of interest; but an item in a late Paris Figaro, which has come quite rapidly via Geneva, makes Pergolese, after a hearty laugh, remark, sotto voce: "This will amuse my darling!" and places the paper carefully in his pocket.

While doing this, a little, perfumed note is brought in to him by his valet. The handwriting is feminine, but

unknown to him.

As Da Messina inspects it rather superciliously—for billets doux are common to this idol of the Italian stage—his servitor remarks: "This came here, Signore, from Madre Vicenza's by Josepha."

Ah, then, how quickly the scented envelope is opened! How lovingly the epistle of his betrothed is scanned!

It is very brief, and reads:

"Carlo Mio: I was so lonely again all last night that I want to remind you to say 'Yes,' if possible, to Eugenia's coming petition. Don't think I will be jealous—for I won't. I know only one has your heart—and that is your

ESTELLE.

"P. S.—I nearly signed another name. Mon Dieu,

how thy love has changed this world for me!"

This is the first letter he has ever had from his sweetheart. He inspects the pretty, feminine, French hand in which it is written, and, after fondling it a little, places it carefully among his treasures, and sits lazily contemplating the pretty parlor of his *suite* of apartments in the Hotel Rebecchino. An entrance, draped with tapestry, gives a glimpse of his comfortable bedroom. Immediately in the rear of this is a small writing-room. The whole place has that peculiar artistic abandon which denotes the careless ease of a bachelor and a bohemian.

A few pictures, all of them very fine, adorn the walls of the rooms. Three or four bronzes and statuettes, masterpieces in their way, are scattered about. Upon a marqueterie cabinet lie two or three daguerreotypes and a few miniatures, mostly of beautiful women. A musical library is indicated by bookshelves holding

the bound scores of nearly all important operas, including even Glück and his rival, Piccini. Lots of sheet music is also *en evidence*; likewise the part of "Edgardo," that Pergolese is recovering for next Sunday evening.

The whole is presided over by one Francisco Antonelli, Da Messina's factotum, a Tuscan of middle age and precise demeanor. Though Antonelli is Italian to his heart's core, Carlo has not dared to take him to France, considering the very peculiar and critical business that has been almost the sole object of his visit to that country.

Just at this moment, this servitor brings in la Contessa di Vilermo's card.

"You seem in better spirits than yesterday morning, maestro," remarks the valet, as he presents the salver to his master.

"Yes, I am more buoyant," replies Carlo, cheerfully, pausing between the bars of one of "Edgardo's" cadenzas; very well knowing that it is not only last evening's smoke, but the certainty of a coming one this evening, that makes his spirits so good. Then he cheerfully commands: "Send her up at once!"

One minute after, Eugenia di Vilermo stands before him. A distracted pleading is on her *spirituelle* face. Aware of the potency of woman's beauty, though her manner is distraught, her toilet is simple but becoming. A neat hat tops the waving bands of her lustrous hair. A plain, black, velvet robe outlines each contour of her *svelte*, graceful, yet almost voluptuous, form; its bodice very tightly laced, its skirts sweeping almost in train to the floor.

As Pergolese rises to cordially greet her, she tenders him a low, sweeping, and humble courtesy. He politely motions her to a scat; but she, still standing, speaks very eagerly: "I thank you for receiving me, Signore. I would not have troubled you, but I am in serious financial difficulty. You have heard of this from Estelle. In the goodness of her heart, she promised to speak for

me. I find myself penniless, in a strange city. This Hungarian matter "—her voice becomes a whisper—" has already broken out——"

"Santo Gennaro! Do you think so?" The spasm of joy that runs over Da Messina's face makes Eugenia certain this man has a distinct hope in Austria's mili-

tary embarrassment.

"Yes, I am sure of it. It has ruined me!" she says, despairingly; then goes on, hurriedly and eagerly: "Please—please let me explain to you my awfui strait!"

"Very well. But first take a chair, Madame la Comtesse," remarks Pergolese, affably; and listens, half abstractedly, to her tale of financial woe and statement of how the Hungarian uprising has brought absolute ruin to her very small property; that her agents have refused not only to send her more money, but have demanded repayment for what they have already advanced. From this, she goes into an account of how quickly Madre Vicenza says she can make her a danseuse; adding, very humbly, but very earnestly: "You have heard my petition from Estelle. I already know that you will not accept anyone as her companion whose actions you can not completely control."

"Yes," he replies. "In the present aspect of affairs,

that is quite impossible."

"Yes—yes, I understand that," she answers, her voice very earnest. "But please—please pardon a request, prompted by the desperate nature of my circumstances. I have scarce enough to pay my hotel bill, and —God knows what I will do!" Tears come into her expressive eyes. "Therefore, I—I"—agitation seems to conquer her—"I pray you take me as your apprentice! Paola assures me that my services can be made valuable shortly. I place myself in your hands, Signore Pergolese. I know it is unusual for one who has passed her majority; but I am still very young. Have my indentures to you drawn up, and I will sign them, and become most obedient and docile to your authority."

Her very eagerness might give Carlo suspicion, but he has no distrust of her. He remembers that this woman aided his sweetheart to smuggle. "Therefore, if she is not one of us, she is no Austrian," he reflects. The only thing of which he feared discovery—the importation of the arms—is all arranged, and now out of his hands. But he forgets that nothing is achieved until it is finished.

"To be candid with you, Madame," he replies, "the great, and practically the only, reason why I consider your plea, which will give me some responsibility and trouble, is because your company will be, I hope, an antidote to the great loneliness of Estelle, who is cut off so much from society, living almost by herself in that great, deserted house; for I have no time nor wish for training débutantes. If I accept your offer, you will be taken to my ward at her demand; and while with her you will render to her the same service and obedience you give to me."

This mention of being ruled by one she considers a chit of a girl is a bitter pill to the haughty contessa; but she gulps it down, answering, very humbly: "Yes, Signore; any command from Estelle, as you wish, shall

be my law."

"As to your dancing education, your training and discipline in that matter will be entirely at the hands of Madre Vicenza; I shall take no part in it," remarks Da Messina. "But, if I know anything about this lady's methods, your lot will be a hard one. You have considered the matter, I presume, and understand?"

"Yes, yes—of course I know Mother Vicenza has a cane." Here la contessa blushes and winces a little in thought of that dread implement; then says, rapidly, to conceal her embarrassment: "Oh, I am quite well aware of what is before me! Did I not once live in a house where four musical phenomena slaved for a stern padrona?"

Despite herself, a tinge of bitterness is in Madame Intrigante's voice; though all the time she is thinking:

"But a week or two of this humility! When I deliver this conspirator to Bolza's justice, I release myself from

the trammels of both padrone and police."

"Very well!" And Da Messina paces up and down the room once or twice, she watching him eagerly, wistfully. For if this man grants her petition, Signora di Vilermo is quite certain that, admitted to intimacy with his ward, she will, in some unguarded moment, obtain the evidence that Bolza demands. If Pergolese refuses, she has little hope of escaping an Austrian dungeon. And two precious days of the ten allowed her by Bolza are already gone!

The terrible anxiety of her face makes Da Messina

sure Eugenia's financial strait must be very dire.

Then he pauses before her, and her heart sinks. He says: "I advise you not to place yourself in a condition which will crush your pride. Vicenza is very severe. Believe me, I pity you." And, his generous hand producing gold, drives the spy to despair.

"No, no!" she pleads, desperately. "I—I could never pay you back! It is the only way I can earn an

honest living."

But here she gives a quick gasp of relief, and has to struggle to keep her face from suspicious exultation; for he is saying to her in the easy familiarity of padrone's command: "Eugenia, I accept your service."

"Oh, God thank you, Signore!" La contessa imme-

diately rises, and stands respectfully before him.

"Go at once to your hotel, and pay your bill. Have you money enough for that?"

"Not by a few florins, Signore," she answers; for she is too wary to destroy her pleaded impecuniosity by

an overflowing purse.

"Then here's the money necessary." He hands her a couple of gold pieces. "From the Bretagne send at once your luggage to Madre Vicenza; then return directly here "—he glances at her velvet robe, and adds—"properly garbed for your new station. I will have the notary draw up your papers; when you have signed

them, you will be immediately sent to Mother Vicenza."

His tone is affable, but commanding.

"Yes!" she answers: "I understand! I thank you, mio padrone!" and, for the first time giving to him the title of her servitude, courtesies to the very floor; and so passes out, quite humbly. But, as Eugenia closes the door, a look of triumph illumines her mobile face, giving it an unholy radiance, as she thinks: "At last. I've got my chance!"

Less than an hour afterward, as Carlo is sitting with a notary in his parlor, a very handsome woman comes in to them. She is plainly garbed in a frock of dark blue stuff, that fits her handsome figure accurately. It is entirely without furbelows or trimmings, save a slight ruffle at the neck and wrists. Her luxuriant hair is braided modestly into two demure tails, which are tied with ribbon of the same color as her gown, the skirt of which falls just below the tops of two perfectly fitting, high-heeled Polish bottines, that tightly laced to midway between ankle and knee outline the symmetry of perfect feet and superb limbs.

She courtesies quite humbly to Da Messina, and likewise to the notary; and then is motioned to a chair.

Whereupon, after a few minutes, the document being completed, at the request of the official, Eugenia, rising, takes her oath of apprenticeship; and, signing the articles of indenture with great rejoicing in her heart, gives herself, with all the formality of Italian municipal law, to a seven years' vassalage.

The notary has departed. The bound-girl is standing before her padrone, her blue eyes darkened, as if by the sadness of her fate; for she is playing her rôle very well. The innate beauty of her drooping pose appeals to Da Messina's artistic taste. At this moment, la contessa has both his sympathy and esteem; when, by one false step, the *intrigante* tosses these away.

Wishing to cheer this exquisite woman who, compelled by poverty, has given to him her liberty, Carlo remarks, cordially and admiringly: "Eugenia, you have

one thing in your favor—you will make a magnificent appearance on the stage."

"Thank Heaven you think so, my kind-hearted maestro!" she answers, a veiled petition in her blue eyes.

"Per Baccho, I do!" he laughs; adding, with padrone's freedom: "Your face is beautiful; your form is perfect as a Hebe's!"

These words of encouragement prompt Eugenia to a dire mistake.

Having gained entrance to Pergolese's privacy, and chance of intimacy with the girl she guesses holds his secrets, this lady, who is by nature both languid and luxurious, no longer wishes the hard discipline and unceasing exercise that will fall upon Mother Vicenza's

dancing-girl.

Therefore, believing Estelle is Da Messina's mistress, and thinking, "If I gain my autocrat's favor, I shall have the same luxuries and liberties of that pampered minx!" she steps to him, appealingly, and suddenly seizing his hand in both of hers, after one quick glance of coquetry, murmurs, in tempting bashfulness: "Now, I—I presume, padrone mio, if I am very obedient and nice to you, I shall be petted by you almost as you caress Estelle, though I am bigger than she, and can not be carried about and dandled on your knee so easily."

Her last words die away in a flutter; for, even as she speaks, Eugenia's acute senses tell her she has made a dismal error. From this time on, Pergolese's manner

to her changes.

"Of course not!" he says, in sharpest sternness; adding, as if in excuse for his partiality: "Estelle paid for my instruction fifteen thousand francs, and is about to become famous. Understand this, my relations to her are most honorable."

Then, resenting this insidious attack upon his faith to his betrothed, who, in the innocence of her heart, has pleaded for this woman, who now assaults her happiness, he says in low tones that frighten his flirtatious apprentice: "Now, mark me! I shall simply give to you the care your indentures require from me: but I shall also govern you rigorously. So be very careful. If I detect you in disobedience, deceit, or light conduct, I shall make you tremble." For Carlo now guesses that Eugenia has all of these within her frivolous head.

Having lost his respect for her, and therefore much of his interest in her, and anxious to get the matter through, he continues brusquely to la contessa, who is hanging her head, trying to look docile: "Now, I will

take you to Madre Vicenza."

His hand is on the bell-rope, when Antonelli, entering, says: "Signor Zerconi begs to be announced. From

his face, I fear he has some ugly news."

"Oh, the manager of La Scala! Show him up!" remarks Pergolese; and, his valet having departed, he says: "Step this way, Eugenia!" indicating that his apprentice is to retire into his writing-room.

"At once!" he commands; for, not wishing to disobey him, and increase his condemnation, yet eager to know what bad news this gentleman brings, the lady-

spy, seems to linger in her movement.

The next instant, her languid steps are quickened; la contessa feels her delicate arm seized by the strong grasp of authority. In a jiffy she is ignominiously marched through his bedroom, and deliberately locked up in the adjoining writing-room.

In this confinement, after a moment's furious rage, forcing herself to philosophy, she thinks: "Pish! Why should I resent treatment I have brought upon myself? Besides, I have really gained my object. This

very room is forecast of my opportunity."

She looks about with the carefulness of an experienced *mouche*, not for actual evidences of Da Messina's conspiring—she has no absurd hope of that—but for some little article which will help her cause.

There are many things she fears to move, as they have grown dusty during their owner's absence in France, indicating that Antonetti is a lazy fellow.

But the waste basket has been in recent use! This catches her quick eye. In an instant she is investigating it. Carelessly tossed into it, with some other desultory correspondence—a note from his impresario, an offer from the San Carlo, in Naples, of an engagement—she finds a perfumed billet doux in a lady's hand. Reading it easily, for it is torn only into four pieces, she jeers: "The first implement to make Estelle hate and betray our padrone!"

For it is a note from the reigning prima donna, the woman Carlo's sweetheart fears, Sophie Olinska, accepting Pergolese's invitation to a supper on the coming Monday, and also suggesting that on the same afternoon, if fine, he drives with her in the Giardini Publica, those pretty gardens that are the playground of the

Milanese.

"Diavolo! La diva mentions Monday afternoon!" thinks la contessa. "If I can but show Da Messina riding with his mistress to Estelle!"

But in this the intrigante does Pergolese an injustice.

For Sophie, who has had half a dozen admirers during his absence, has, upon his return, whispered to him: "You desire to introduce this dashing Austrian captain to me? I have noticed by his attentions to me, his flowers, and certain other hints of anonymous jewelry, that he perchance wishes to be quite devoted to me. As you, Carlo, give this little *fête* for the very purpose of introducing him, I presume I shall very shortly see the last of you. Please take your leave of me so that Milan doesn't scoff me. One drive about the Corso, and then when, on my next, another gentleman sits by my side, the world will say——"

"That I did not desert you—but you me? With the greatest pleasure in the world, Signorita Olinska!" Pergolese has replied, with a bow. And this note merely

mentions the afternoon la diva has selected.

This epistle being sufficient for Eugenia's purpose, she hastily conceals it over a heart that beats with hope; and is quite happy when, after a few minutes of con-

finement, her padrone, unlocking the door, calls her, sternly, to him.

As she comes out to him, observing the mutiny upon her delicate lips, he says, warningly: "You are, I fear, about to make yourself much trouble, Eugenia. Mother Vicenza will not, like me, excuse a reluctant disobedience. Prepare yourself, and I will take you to her."

La contessa's experience has been such that she hurriedly answers: "Yes, mio padrone," and makes humble courtesy.

As she drapes her skirt for the salute, her maestro's face, coldly critical, exhibits disapproval. "Peste!" he says, grimly. "You are not arrayed for your station, as I directed. Pearl, silken hose and tasseled boots, fit to deck a princessa's limbs, on a dancing apprentice will create some comment among the loungers about the hotel."

"I—I didn't think," she says, deprecatingly.

But he knows she *did* think; and remarks, severely: "Never dare to wear these in the street again! Now put on your wraps at once, and veil yourself closely!" and immediately leads his beautiful and coquettish apprentice to a carriage.

Here, taking a seat opposite to her, as they drive off, his words increase Eugenia's indignation. "I have already given half interest in your services to Madre Vicenza," he remarks, "so that she will be most urgent in your education. When Estelle sends for you, be careful she does not report your inattention to her requests or disregard of her directions to Madre Paola; for from now on I shall probably see but little of you."

This practical refusal to give her any great personal supervision is a slight to Eugenia's pride. "He has no more consideration for me than for any apprentice poverty might bring to him!" she thinks, bitterly, and begins to long for her padrone's undoing. Before, her pursuit of Da Messina had been simply from the wish to gain Bolza's pardon; to this is now added a personal hate, that gradually grows tremendous.

Her face is very pale, as her padrone assists her from the carriage, and leads her up the big stairway.

But he is intercepted by light feet, and a joyous voice cries: "Carlo mio, thank you for Eugenia!" as Estelle places the arm of affection about la contessa's waist.

Misconstruing this unfortunate phrase, the new bound-girl thinks, bitterly: "Thank you for Eugenia!" Diavolo, the chick imagines she owns me, too!" And, though she responds very sweetly to the favorite's kiss of welcome, she includes Da Messina's betrothed in the wormwood of her heart.

But now, with a quick, athletic rush, Paola comes down to seize upon her prize. She says, cordially: "Welcome, my child, to my home!" but, after a moment, adds: "Run up-stairs, pet, at once. We'll have you at your exercises very quickly. I shall make of you a superb artiste before you think it!" With this, the strong-armed, strong-limbed, masculine dancing mistress leads her new pupil away, and from this time becomes Eugenia's autocrat.

On being so suddenly deprived of her companion's company, Estelle pouts slightly; but as they stand together in her parlor, Da Messina remarks: "You must interfere as little as possible with Eugenia's training; besides, my darling, you have your own studies to keep vou busy."

"Yes, Madame Pacini comes in a few minutes," returns his betrothed; but laughs: "I know my decla-

mation, so you've just time to kiss me."

As he takes her to his breast, the crumpling of the newspaper reminds him. "Here is a curious rumor from England in the Figaro," he remarks, and passes the journal to her, pointing out the item, which reads: "A passenger who has just arrived from Dover, England, reports to us that the fugitive Baronne de Portalis was in that place when he left. This astute lady of many crimes, it is said, escaped from France in the suit of Louis Philippe. Like the flying king, who called himself William Smith, she gave herself an English name, and traveled as Bridget Iones."

Inspecting this peculiar output of Gallic journalism, Estelle's face grows pale, and she trembles slightly; but finding the arm of her protector about her waist, and hearing a voice of which she is quite in awe, yet loves with her whole soul, saying, tenderly, "Don't fear; no mouchard shall get my prize!" her color returns, and she remarks, naïvely: "Mon Dieu, the newspapers will soon make me out as marvelously elusive a criminal as Robert Macaire himself!"

"Pish! I know where to find Madame la Baronne every time!" laughs Da Messina.

And saluting his prize, he thinks no more of this report, or several additional rumors of la Baronne de Portalis, which come to him from time to time; though in the future crisis of his life these canards rise up before him, for a little time, big as Colossus!

Therefore saying to his sweetheart that he will call again at five, he goes away quite content, though he leaves a most dangerous enemy behind him, not only to himself, but one who will become an enemy to Estelle.

For shortly into Eugenia's heart enters a mean envy, as she sees Da Messina's favorite, though taking her studies, living with the luxury of a lady; while she, who but yesterday had sported a spurious title, after toiling at the monotonous exercises of the dance enforced upon her unremittingly by a stern taskmistress, lives in a little garret-room, and fares no better than any of the other dancing-girls of Madre Vicenza.

CHAPTER XIX.

TWO GENTLEMEN WHISPER IN THE OPERA BOX.

Of this there is almost immediate evidence, though Da Messina does not detect it. When he calls, in the afternoon, Estelle, after greeting him very sweetly, immediately asks a favor: "Can't you take me to the opera to-night? I—I have scarce been out of the house since I came here."

"Certainly!" he answers. Then, remembering the bill, he queries, a tinge of embarrassment upon his face: "You know who sings?"

"Certainly—the beautiful Olinska! That's one of the reasons that I want to go; I—I would like to see her!"

"Very well," he says, pleasantly; "I will take you. Be dressed and ready. I will have a box for you, and

will call at a quarter to seven."

"Oh, thank you so much!" Then she says, archly: "In return, may I offer you a cigar? I'll darken the rooms; I'll close the doors; I'll plug the keyholes! Though after you have gone I must ventilate. I was a little careless last evening, and this morning, when Mother Paola came in, she sniffed about suspiciously; and then said, very savagely: 'French girl, do you smoke accursed Austrian cigarettes?' 'No,' I stammered; 'but perhaps Pergolese may have lit a cigar.' At this she cried: 'Basta, rogue, don't dare accuse that patriot!' with such an awful snort of unbelief that I had to run into my bedroom to avoid laughing in her horrified face."

It does not take much cajoling to induce Carlo to smoke a cigar, for which he has longed all day; and, soon after, he goes away to make arrangements for his sweetheart's pleasure.

So, quite shortly, comes to Estelle a box of evening gloves and a great bouquet; and following these, at the appointed time, Pergolese, to take his affianced to

the opera.

Dressed in the elaborate evening costume of the period, with high, white silk stock; embossed velvet vest; dress-coat with immense bouffant tails; and dark trousers, fitting tightly about his well-shaped legs and strapped down over patent-leather pumps, and silken stockings, her lover, as Estelle enters her parlor to greet him, looks to her very much like a god.

"You don't object," she murmurs, quite bashfully, poking out a pretty foot in white, satin slipper from under her white, silk jupe. "I lengthened this a little." Then her eyes blaze, and she says, passionately: "When I gaze at her, I want to feel I am a woman!"

Pergolese knows quite well to whom Estelle refers, but he has judgment to only reply to her question.

"Humph! Yes," he says, meditatively, "the Austrian officials will probably not notice that my apprentice of sixteen has grown two years older in a day; but please increase your age very gradually." Then his eyes light up at his affianced's beauty, for she looks more engaging in her maturity than in her childishness, the simple, white frock, cut for evening wear, giving him a view of exquisite womanhood in the delicately rounded bust and shapely arms.

"As I thought you would like to see the audience at La Scala thoroughly, it being the biggest theater in Italy, and knowing you brought no such thing from France, permit me!" he says, and, with lover's eagerness, tenders to his affianced a magnificent opera-glass,

of white ivory, mounted with gold.

"For me? Oh, Carlo mio! How beautiful! How exquisite!"

Then, Mother Paola coming in, Estelle cries to her:

"Look at my handsome present!"

And, as they leave, the old woman, going up-stairs, tells of the generosity of Pergolese to his bound-girl. This brings an awful rage to the heart of Eugenia, who reclines, fatigued with the first exercise Vicenza has exacted from her; though her mistress, being a wise instructress, has put the travail of the dance quite lightly upon the delicate limbs of her new pupil.

Lying upon her little cot in the small room that has been assigned to her, la contessa sighs bitterly, as she listens to the departing wheels that indicate Estelle is being borne away to a scene of gayety such as *Madame Intrigante* adores; but, a moment after, jeers, as merrily as aching limbs will let her: "That was my sug-

gestion that Estelle should see the beauty of her rival! Dissension between her and her lover is my great hope; so that some day, in her jealous torture, this pampered pet may cry out something to me from the depths of a wounded heart that shall give me freedom from the accursed Vicenza and deliverance from Bolza's wrath."

But utterly unaware of this, Estelle, this evening, is quite content in Pergolese's present attention; and emits a low, excited, happy cry, as she gazes from out the curtains of a second-tier box upon La Scala in its glory; and quite radiantly listens to the strains of Bellini's overture, though Pergolese has a constrained and anxious brow.

As he has assisted his ward from the carriage, the tenor, who was till yesterday Milan's delight, has noticed a strange coldness in the greeting of the hackmen, who were wont, upon his former returns, to doff their hats to him, as if he were a god revisiting this earth.

Upon the staircase he has seen familiar faces turned from his, and once he has thought a lady's voice has whispered, sadly: "He is an Austrian tenor now."

But Estelle, thinking his gloom is because he fears she will be disturbed by her approaching sight of his former mistress, determines her manner shall not add to it; and gazes upon him with trustful eyes, as he points out persons of distinction entering the boxes, that

are now rapidly filling.

"There is il Comte Cesaresco, with his countess, over there—true friends of Italy, both of them! And that gentleman just entering the first-tier box is my friend Gabrio Casati!" he remarks. "Look! That dashing fellow—the one handing her fan to the lady in blue satin and silver gauze—is young Luciano Manara, as gallant as a knight of old! And those are our bourgeoise in the pit. But "—he glances toward the gallery—" those fellows up there, every man and boy of them, are judges of music; and every one of them Pergolese's friend!" though there seems a tinge of doubt in Da Messina's voice, as he proclaims this last.

Tust here a strange hush falls upon the chattering audience.

"The Governor of Lombardy!" explains Carlo, as into the Imperial box steps stout, old Marshal Radetzky, followed by a brilliant staff. "Observe the ladies are all turning their heads away, to show they do not like him. 'Tis a great mistake, in which too many of us indulge, to be always snarling at that stalwart watchdog."

But the stern, old Austrian General, who carries his white head as high as, when a boy, he fought the Turks, or when, as a man, he battled with Napoleon, is determined to act as if there is no sedition in this turbulent town; and sits calmly gazing on the audience, though he very well knows there is a volcano beneath him; and, being a wise chieftain, has a troop of cavalry about his carriage outside, and two regiments of infantry in nearby barracks, ready to march at the word; and he and each officer of his staff, besides their dress swords, carry, concealed, two service pistols, primed and loaded.

But, after one glance at the Governor of Lombardy, Estelle nervously turns her opera-glass upon the stage: for the curtain is going up, showing the moon rising upon the sacred wood of the Druids.

Da Messina smiles, as he notices her delight in the music and performance; and sits, gazing with tender

eyes upon his betrothed.

Suddenly his sweetheart gives a start, and her white hand darts to her heart, as if to stay its fluttering. Glancing toward the stage, Pergolese knows that Estelle, with her eyes on Norma, has seen a loveliness that affrights her.

And she might well have cause for fear!

For Olinska, draped in the white robes of the virgin priestess of that barbaric Druid faith, whose sacrifice for tainted vows was death, as she walks under the oaks of the sacred grove, her form outlined in its perfect maturity of graceful voluptuousness, is at her very zenith, and has a loveliness potent enough to charm the heart of any man; though Pergolese, as he sits behind his betrothed's gleaming shoulders, comparing the diva's more meretricious charms to the beauties of the sweet girl whose heart he knows beats for him, wonders how the prima donna had ever been to him even a passing fancy. But men change their minds, and Da Messina is like the rest of them.

Then Norma, having cut with sacrificial knife the sacred mistletoe, Estelle for the moment forgets all else save that unearthly, mystic beauty peculiar to the "Casta Diva." Accentuated by that weird, yet enchanting, chorus of Druid priests and virgins, it enthralls her, as this divine melody will any being with ears to hear it.

But, a few moments after, when Olinska sings "Ah Bello, à Me Ritorna!" it seems to Da Messina's betrothed as if this were a cry from his mistress for Pergolese to return to her arms; and, as the beautiful prima donna leaves the stage, Estelle, with a scarcebreathed, pathetic sigh, puts down her opera-glass.

As Da Messina notices that the ivory, against which his sweetheart's fair eyes have been placed, is wet with her tears, he turns his head away in shame and selfabasement. Ah, if men with their first, pure love could wipe out the reckless passions of their immaturity, how

happy would many a bridegroom be!

Then the act goes on, and to Adalgisa, the new love of the Pollio, Roman proconsul, Estelle seems to give her sympathy, so much that, at the conclusion of the "Vieni in Roma," as if to encourage Norma's rival, she tosses, during the applause, her bouquet to the lady who sings the part.

Soon after, the curtain having gone down on the act, she hears, just behind her, a genial voice: "Carlo, mein lieber freund, I obtained leave of absence from my glorious uncle, and of course at once came to visit you." Turning to Estelle, the Austrian officer says, cordially: "I hope this evening has been a pleasant one to

you, Mademoiselle! I thank Pergolese for bringing you to greet such a beautiful artiste," and he breaks forth in wild and extravagant praise of Olinska. "Thou hast no bouquet to throw to her," he says. "Here is another one, to keep for your own sake; and this one, to toss la diva, when she makes the house wild at the beauty of her voice. Some day," he continues, in German frankness, "I hope you will sing as well as she. But it is not her face, it is her charm, her eyes, her lips, her hair, that make la belle Sophie the most admired woman on the stage!"

At praise of one she fears, Estelle's eyes grow troubled, and her pretty figure restless. Her little foot is tapping the cushion under it quite viciously.

Remarking her embarrassment, and ashamed of being indirectly its cause, Da Messina about this time, under plea of saying a few words to old-time friends, unwisely goes away.

For no sooner has he stepped from the box than Franz whispers: "Oh, how I envy the grand Pergolese! They say that *la diva* once loved him. Must he not have been happy, my little lady?"

As he says this, he wonders that Estelle shades her face from his observation by her fan, and why her eyes flash like stars as she, after a moment, remarks, in attempted nonchalance: "How old is your great uncle—that stalwart warrior sitting over there?" She waves her fan toward the Imperial box.

"Eighty-three last birthday."

"I—I should think he would be too aged for active service!"

"Ach Gott!" cries the captain, enthusiastically. "Some men are never too old to fight!" To this he adds: "The Uncle Johann Wenzel rides a horse like a rittmaster, and loves the ladies—God bless him!—as if he were a court page."

"Then I should think he must have felt embarrassed when all the ladies this evening turned their heads away as he came in," says Estelle, making, in her confusion, a tactless remark.

"Mein Himmel!" guffaws Franz. "One who has confronted the faces of armed men by the million will scarcely be afraid of women's backs!" And the Austrian, quite delighted at his own wit, goes babbling on, and in his German frankness embarrasses Estelle, whom he still considers as a child. "We have grown older, ch?" he smiles, glancing at her lengthened skirt. "This climate of Italy is quite wonderful. It changes childhood into girlhood in a day."

"Oh, you refer to my more mature costume?" she answers, growing red. "That is a reward for my diligence in music. Come, some afternoon, and hear me

sing!"

"With pleasure," answers the captain, briskly. "But the curtain is rising. Still, it is only a short ballet between the acts; so we will soon hear the divine Olinska again. Please tell Carlo that I am anxious for him to set the exact day on which he entertains—but that is a matter not, perhaps, best for young and innocent ears! Gnadiges fraulein, I make my adieu!"

He kisses Estelle's gloved fingers, and is passing out of the box, when, in the anteroom, he chances to encounter Pergolese. After a few whispered words, Da Messina's sweetheart hears the Austrian's strident tones: "Then it is Monday evening! Madame Gerome has also accepted, you say? God be praised! I shall soon meet the most beautiful woman on the stage! Adieu, mein lieber freund!"

And Radetzky goes away, not guessing what an unfortunate pebble he has tossed into Pergolese's fountain of love; for, though he is very well aware that Da Messina has an affectionate regard for his bound-girl, to whom he permits liberties quite uncommon for her station, the idea that Estelle should be the affianced of her maestro never enters the Austrian's head.

This speech in the anteroom, which is immediately coupled in Estelle's bright mind with Franz's former re-

mark in the box, has such an effect upon her that, when Pergolese steps in to her, she says, affecting languor to conceal grief: "If you don't mind, would you please take me home. I worked so hard at my music to-day that I find myself fatigued. Of course, you can come back afterward to hear Olinska sing," she adds.

"Not at all," he replies. "I will have half an hour with you, and also a—" Here he claps his teeth together so sharply that, despite her misery, Estelle laughs slightly, as he continues, bitterly: "But I don't

return to my friends at La Scala to-night!"

And Pergolese is very well pleased not to return. The shoulders of his friends have been too cold for him. For those who did not believe he was familiar with the Austrian officer, have seen Radetzky cordially welcomed this evening in his box; and the ostracism they extended to their white-coated enemies is now extended to the tenor, who, up to this time, had been a little god in artistic Milan.

True, Casati has welcomed him to his box most cordially, and his grip has been that of a man facing death with him; and Manara's greeting has been more cordial even than it had been before. But these men know what the others do not know. They know that Da Messina is risking his life for their city; though Luciano, taking Pergolese aside, whispers to him, excitedly: "My dear boy, don't you think you are giving up too much for your friendship for this Radetzky, who may be a very good fellow, but, of course, must be at dagger's point with you in a few days." This last is scarce breathed into Da Messina's very ear.

"No," replies Carlo, with the same guarded tone; "I think we keep our enemies too much at a distance. Some day we may need a friend in the Austrian camp."

"And some day you hope to make traitor of Radetzky, the nephew of the Marshal? Carlo, 'tis a maxim that all tenors are maniacs; but I had made you the exception to the rule,"

"You can do that still," returns Pergolese; and with this enigma leaves his friend.

But these things make Da Messina and his ward quite silent, as they drive back to the Via Oriani, where, being admitted by the sleepy doorkeeper into the court-yard, they pass up the big stairs and enter Estelle's pretty parlor.

Here, as she turns up the lamp, a little cry issues from her lips; for on the table, greeting her eyes, stands a plain, steel box, quite heavy and very strong, and secured by a Bramah lock, which in that day was considered exceedingly safe and intricate.

"Look, Carlo! Something for me? But I find no key to it!"

"Here is the open sesame," answers Da Messina, and unlocks the box. "The upper portion," he explains, "is for any trinkets that you value—that opera-glass, your fan, the ring you wear about your sweet neck. And this lower one"—he touches a spring, and, as it flies open, she gazes at him, surprised for it is full of French gold. "In it," he says, "are ten thousand francs for you to use at time of need, for God knows what awful things may come upon this city within the next few days! No—no! Don't thank me! It is but a portion of thy own." Then, taking her in his arms, he whispers, tenderly: "If aught happens to me—"

"No, no-my God, don't think of that!"

"If anything happens to me, go to Captain Radetzky, for if I am down, the Austrians will probably be dominant. He has a noble heart, and will do a great deal for my sake. Tell him what thou wert to me."

"Wert to you! Misericorde, you mean if you are—" With a low cry, she puts her arms about

his neck.

But he, soothing her in the way she loves, after a moment says, lightly: "Peste! Tears are making your dear eyes red, my darling. This advice is only

for the very worst, which shall not come if Da Mes-

sina can prevent it!"

And Estelle, having great faith in her affianced's quickness of design and personal bravery, and the city to her seeming, notwithstanding his words, quite peaceful, regains her spirits, and says, archly: "But what am I to do with this? It is too heavy for my hands to carry, even into the next room."

"Oh, then I'll help you to put it away. You have

several closets in your chamber?"

"Yes-two entirely unused."

"Only keep careful guard of this," he adds, as he relocks the strong-box. Taking the key, which is attached to a slight, golden chain, he places the latter tenderly about her neck, and she looks so sweetly at him she gets a kiss.

Whereupon the two, half laughing, pick up the box and carry it quite briskly into Estelle's chamber. Here, turning up the lamp, Carlo looks upon three closets, and

says: "Where?"

"That one to the left," she replies; and, opening it,

they deposit therein Estelle's treasure-box.

"Now, for this you must have at least three cigars," she whispers; and, going to her trunk, brings out the solace for which Da Messina has probably been longing. And she plugging the keyholes, and looking carefully to the windows, he assents, with a contented sigh. Then as he sits in smoker's paradise before her, she, taking chair near him, says: "Thank you so much for this! I have felt so helpless at times without a gold piece in my pocket. Trust me; I will use them as you direct."

Her gratitude is unfortunate, for now Estelle does not like to mention the strange suspicion Franz's words have brought to her; for Da Messina is a man who meets things very firmly and very straightly, and his explanation would probably forever take Olinska out of his sweetheart's jealous heart.

Yet even as she looks at him this seems to go from

her. "This man has been so considerate, so kind! Besides, when he loved her," she reflects, "he had not yet seen me! He threw her picture into the fire; and now, even if Franz's words are true, he is going to introduce this Austrian gallant, who seems to worship her, to la belle Sophie. That is not the act of a man still passionate for Olinska!"

So, after a little, he bids her a reluctant good-by, and goes home through the streets that are growing silent.

But as he walks, Pergolese utters these curious words: "The fools of my native city berate me for a friendship that some day, perhaps, will give me information that may be vital to our cause! And yet," he mutters, with an awful sigh, "Zerconi fears they will hiss and hoot me off La Scala's stage next Sunday night."

CHAPTER XX.

MADAME IAGO.

As Da Messina leaves Estelle, his sweetheart, humming a merry air, opens the windows of her parlor to remove unpatriotic fumes; then trips blithely into her chamber, to emit a low, startled cry.

"Don't fear me, dear one!" whispers the soft voice

of Eugenia.

"You here? Oh, you came down to chat with me? How nice of you!" babbles the embryo prima donna, her voice again growing clear and silvery after her little fright.

"Yes; I thought you might wish my service," replies la contessa, as she lights the lamp. "From Signor da Messina's words, this morning, I presume that I am

to act as your maid, if you demand."

"No, no!" cries the younger lady, in indignant sympathy. "You are my companion, my friend! We are both Pergolese's bound-girls!"

But the intrigante will not give Estelle the slightest

cause for being jealous of *her*; and answers, craftily: "Oh, I am old Vicenza's apprentice! *Dio mio*, as I did my toe exercises before that dragon, I felt by every muscle in me that I was indeed her girl. But I came down to chat with you, to keep you from being lonely." In this last Bolza's agent annunciates a deliberate lie.

Some two hours before she had taken advantage of Madre Paola being in bed, and Josepha at La Scala, with their few dancing-girls, who took part in the ballet, to slip down quietly and tremblingly into Estelle's chamber, and examine that young lady's trunk, hoping to find in it some clew that would aid her to Da Messina's undoing.

Surprised by Estelle's return, long before the opera ended, Eugenia had only time to slip into one of the closets of the bedroom before Pergolese and his sweetheart entered the chamber, bearing the steel box. By great good fortune, Estelle had selected another closet to the one occupied by the cowering Eugenia, whose knees knocked together in fear of being discovered in a new transgression by her padrone.

"But we didn't see you when we came in here, carrying my strong-box," remarks Estelle, who is not overpleased, fearing that Eugenia may have overheard a love scene. Opening her eyes, she asks: "Where

could you have been?"

"In that closet," replies la contessa, pointing. "I did not dare come out. I feared Signor da Messina.

He was so stern to me to-day."

"Pish!" laughs the other. "Pergolese is no ogre! But stay down with me to-night. I am lonely here, Eugenia; I am really frightened. I have lots of room for you." She points to the big, ample, inviting bed.

But the other hesitates, whispering: "Madre Vi-

cenza!"

"Oh, I'll arrange that matter for you! You know, you are to come to me whenever I ask!" cries the girl.

"Well, of course, if you want it; you know I've got to obey you," returns la contessa, quite happy at the

luxury before her; for this big bed, with its dainty sheets and soft, lace-edged pillows, is in great contrast to the miserable cot she occupies up-stairs.

So the two, laughingly and pleasantly, help each other to undress; and both getting into the white robes of night, one seems as graceful as a fairy, the other like a drooping goddess, Eugenia being still languid from the exercise of the dance, as enforced by Vicenza; and after a little they go quite happily to bed.

Here, with their heads on neighboring pillows and their tresses mingling, Estelle naturally speaks of the man she thinks about, giving a short description of her visit, under Da Messina's escort, to the opera; and in return receives a dexterous pin prick from Eugenia.

"A fede!" laughs Madame Intrigante, her lips quite near to the ear of the sweet girl she is tormenting. "When Pergolese sat in that box, looking at you one minute and Olinska the next, he must have felt something like the Pollio of the opera—divided 'twixt the old love and the new."

As answer she receives a more complete understanding of Estelle's character than had come to her before. For a face, lighted by two eyes that, in the darkness of the room, seem balls of fire, rises from the pillow before her; her tender arm is clutched in such frantic fury that Eugenia winces; a voice, hoarse with rage, says: "I command you—no further slur upon his love for me!"

"But I can speak?"

"Not if I tell you no! Remember your master's instructions! Shall I have to treat you as thy padrona?"

"Of course—treat me as badly as the rest!" sighs la contessa; adding, in crafty humility: "If I displease you, you know you have but to speak to that accursed Vicenza, and I shall suffer!" then sobs: "You, whom I thought my—my friend!" And thus this schemer wins a battle, by her very helplessness, from a tender and noble heart.

"I—I am still your friend," murmurs Estelle, whose generous soul reproaches her for having said sharp words to one who dare not reply to them. "Only, please—please do not speak so to me! You—you can not guess how you wound me." Then she cries: "I know he loves me! Look at the beautiful presents he gave me to-day!" She springs out of the bed, and turning up the lamp, exhibits to the envious eyes of this female Iago the exquisite gifts her betrothed had lavished on her. "Look at them! Do they not prove my Carlo's love?"

"Dio, they are beautiful!" assents the contessa, inspecting the really valuable presents Estelle puts frantically in her hands. Then, with fiendish subtlety, she makes these very gifts of ardent lover nearly break his affianced's heart. She looks at the baubles closely, and remarks: "This fan is from Fossini, 62 Rue Richelieu, Paris: and this opera-glass, a magnificent Tumelle, from Chevallier, 15 Place du Pont Neuf, Paris. And Da Messina only knew you after leaving Paris?"

For this information had drifted to Eugenia from

Estelle's careless words during the journey.

"These were not purchased in Milan, but in Paris and before he met you!" she continues. "Oh, you are, my child, receiving the presents intended for another! 'Twas always said Pergolese was very generous to Olinska."

"Mon Dieu, if I thought that!" Estelle's white arm is upraised, and she would dash the opera-glass and fan upon the floor, and dance upon them with her

pretty feet.

But Eugenia, catching her hand, dissents: "I may be mistaken. They may have been purchased in Milan. Sometimes such goods are brought from Paris here; but not very often, for the duty on them is too high. You are more apt to meet the Viennese manufacture in this town. But come to bed, and for God's sake don't cry! I feel it a reproach upon my foolish tongue." For la contessa will not have Estelle destroy Carlo's gifts. "If he guessed I chatted to his pet in this way, I'd never open lip to her again," she thinks.

Having said as much on the subject of Pergolese as, for the moment, she dares, Eugenia, as she renestles herself in the soft bed, now gains Estelle's sympathy by adding: "And in return, please—please let me go to sleep! Maladetto, if you had, like me, to get up at seven o'clock in the morning to commence the labors of a ballerina, you would want to rest!"

"Oh, how cruel! I have been keeping you awake, and you so fatigued. Forgive me, dear!" entreats

Estelle.

"Of course I do! I—I love you!" yawns Eugenia.

Then the snake, turning on her pillow, goes to sleep; but the dove lies restless and unhappy. The fangs have wounded her a little, but the poison has not yet wholly entered into her veins.

And now the tremendous labors of the Milanese leaders, arranging armed rebellion, keep Da Messina from Estelle, and aid Eugenia's purpose. This next day he omits her music lesson, and only comes after dark.

As he smokes, she prattles: "Carlo mio, can't I go on the stage and watch you from the wings, at La

Scala, on Sunday evening?"

"No," he answers, shortly. "I do not wish you on the stage. I will—I will get a box for you, mia cara. My man, Antonelli, will sit in its anteroom, to look after you."

"Can Eugenia go with me?"

"Yes, if you want her," he replies. "In fact, you had better have a companion. Still "—there is a hesitation in his manner—"do you wish to hear me very much?"

"Mon Dieu!" she cries. "Hear you! Why, my beloved, I have been dreaming of it ever since I saw your name upon the boards; thinking each day is one day nearer to my being able to applaud with my own

little hands, and throw a bouquet—no, two or three—

to Pergolese!"

"Then I—I will send you a box," he assents; and, after a short, but pleasant, interview, leaves his sweetheart.

The next day, Friday, not until the evening does he lounge into his ward's pretty parlor. Apparently too tired to hear her sing her exercise, he sits, smoking his cigar, in a gloomy, meditative way, though gazing at his betrothed with almost pathetic tenderness through the blue rings of vapor.

"You seem tired, Carlo mio, and distressed," she re-

marks, anxiously.

"Yes—my rehearsals," he answers. For he dare not tell her of their preparations for a struggle to the death with Austria, some of which he superintends himself; how each forge and machine shop is secretly making rude guns of oaken logs, bored out and sheathed with steel, to take the place of artillery; how they are accumulating powder, homemade and crude, concocted of such niter and sulphur as they can quietly gather up; and how all these, being made with a secrecy begotten by the fear of death, are infinitely more laborious than if done in the open light of day. Therefore, he puts his sweetheart's questions off with the plea of rehearsals for his Sunday evening appearance at La Scala, and very lovingly, yet somewhat abstractedly, taking leave of his betrothed, goes away.

After he has gone, and Estelle has purged the room of suspicious odor, she rings her bell, and asks, as usual,

that Eugenia be sent down to her.

A few minutes after, that lady comes in, a constrained expression on her face, her blue eyes darkened by some hidden fury, yet rather red about their lids.

"Please excuse my dishabille. I was too tired, Estelle, to dress," she murmurs, as, with a loose, white wrapper covering her loveliness, la contessa gazes upon her victim, and is pleased to note that the pampered one

is drooping. "What is the matter, dear?" she jeers. "Has Pergolese given you but little of his company to-day?"

"Yes. But, since you are tired, my hard-worked friend, let's go to bed at once," sighs Da Messina's

sweetheart.

So, the exhausted ballerina follows Estelle, who, as they disrobe, eager to explain the reason of her lover's negligence, continues: "You see, Carlo could only come this evening; and then he scarce heard me sing—he was so exhausted, like you, my pet, from rehearsal.

It's rehearsal, rehearsal, day after day!"

"So you think Pergolese's rehearsals keep him from you?" sneers la contessa, as she languidly kicks off the slippers from her dainty feet. "Don't you know, my little foolish one, that in one rehearsal this tenor will recover his part; and as for Olinska, she must have sung those love duets with him fifty times upon the stage, and God knows how many in private!"

"Oh, don't hint of that!" pleads the tormented one.
"In mercy, don't!" Then, confronting her tormentor, she says, proudly: "Carlo loves me, and proves

it!"

"By visiting you each night, because your parlor is the one place in Milan he can enjoy a cigar, and still be patriot; yet comes no other time," Eugenia scoffs. "Ma foi! My poor child, doesn't it seem as if Per-

golese came to you simply for his smoke?"

At this devlish insinuation, Estelle gives a shuddering, broken cry, and droops like a wounded bird. Then suddenly her head rises, her eyes blaze, indignantly; she mutters: "If that's only what he comes for, he will get no more of them!" and rushes to her trunk to throw the smuggled tit-bits into the fire.

But this brings overwhelming terror to Eugenia; for, deprived of his luxuries, Da Messina will surely discover the reason of his loss. "Don't do it!" she begs. "He knew that you had but a hundred. He

counts them with a miser's count."

"Why not?" says Estelle, hoarsely. "To get these for him I risked imprisonment! Oh, 'twas joy to see him smoke each one! But now, if I thought that he only came to me for love of them—oh God of Heaven!—that would be too great a misery, too supreme a humiliation!" And she struggles with la contessa, who dare not have them destroyed.

"Mon Dieu! I'll do with my own what I will!" she says. "Obey me—take your hands off them!" and her eyes shine in their torture like two stars of night.

Seeing Estelle's resolve, Eugenia takes another method. She suddenly shudders: "My Heaven, would you get me beaten?"

"What! Has Paola dared?"

"Not yet; but it will come! Therefore don't gain me the hatred of my padrone. If he knew he lost through my foolish babbling the only cigars in Milan a patriot can smoke, I should be without his protection from Vicenza's severity."

"But Da Messina," cries Estelle, "shall know she threatens you! I'll write to him. He'll come to-

morrow morning."

"No, no! Tell anyone but him! If Paola knew I had appealed to him, she would be angered more. Only ask him a favor—that he will come to-morrow and see me dance, and praise me to Vicenza. His indifference to me makes her think he doesn't imagine I can ever become of value. Therefore she is cross to me. Just get him to praise me—that's all. Please write now—"

"Oh, I'll do that quick enough!" cries Estelle; and, sitting down in her night robe, writes a little note to her betrothed. "That will bring him!" she says, as

she seals the letter.

"Did you ask him to come to see me at once?"

"Oh, no! I asked him to come and see me. I told him I must see him; I had something I must have him admire. Oh, that'll bring him—though you seem to doubt his love for me. Then, when he is here, I'll have the matter so arranged that he can not avoid you;

for, in truth, sometimes I think he doesn't have much interest in you, my poor Eugenia."

And so, taking the snake in her breast, the dove soothes her; and they go to sleep in each other's arms.

But, even as she closes her eyes, one thought is paramount in la contessa's brain. "Four days of jealousy, and this woman has not opened her lips to me! Six days but now remain, and then—Bolza! Dio mio! My only hope is in proving to Estelle that Da Messina is not true. And to do this, I must have my padrona's favor, so that she will grant me one request."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE POPULACE CAST DOWN THEIR IDOL.

Estelle's epistle the next morning reaching Da Messina, he fondles it, and puts it with the other writing of his love, and contrives, busy as he is, to answer it in person about twelve o'clock the next day, bringing with him Franz Radetzky. For in truth, outside of the Central Committee, who know that he is a true patriot. Pergolese has now but few companions in Milan except the Austrian officer, who very well knowing what this Italian is giving up for his friendship, looks at him quite tenderly with his honest, German eyes.

"You said a little entertainment that I should see and criticise," remarks Da Messina; "so I brought Franz with me. Is it a dramatic recitation, or some new

high note that you have achieved?"

"No; I arranged it. It is Eugenia!" cries Estelle; and, getting Carlo by himself for a moment, she hastily whispers the matter to him, adding: "La contessa is being costumed. If you love me, praise la contessa's dancing; otherwise Vicenza will be harsh to her."

"Oh, if you ask me, I will say Eugenia is an embryo Taglioni," remarks Pergolese. "Now that you mention it, I haven't seen her since I took her under my wing. But Franz will be the better to applaud. He

The most enthusiastic." With this, he explains to the German officer who the new ballet-girl is; at which the other says: "Ach Gott, she must be very lovely; she was very beautiful in clothes!"

At this suggestion Da Messina laughs, and Estelle trips blushingly ahead of the gentlemen, as they all go up the stairway to Madre Vicenza's salle de danse, a big room, with a waxed, oaken floor.

In a corner is seated one of Paola's girls at the piano.

As the gentlemen seat themselves, Estelle suggests: "I will tell Paola that we are here," and runs out of the room.

A minute of two later she comes flying back, her eyes big with excitement, and whispers to them: "Eugenia is beautiful as a fairy; the dress Tancredi, the costumer of La Scala, made for her is ethereal."

Even as she speaks, Franz utters a short exclamation of delight, as Mother Vicenza introduces a débutante whose cheeks are blushing, and whose eyes diffidently seek the polished floor.

"She is a little bashful in her fleshings and gauze skirts!" laughs the *maîtressé de ballet*, who is leading Eugenia by one hand, the other holding a long, white wand.

"Now, salute your padrone and his friend," says Paola, affably. And *la ballerina*, with averted eyes, sweeps down till one gleaming knee just grazes the floor.

Then Madre Vicenza waves her wand, and at its signal the débutante takes pose, while even Da Messina, who at first had little interest, now can not keep his eyes from the lovely contessa, unveiled for padrone's comment, criticism, and inspection.

The *spirituelle* beauty of her eyes and face gives lightness to the outlines of a form which is so symmetrically proportioned that it seems a fairy's, though its contours have the perfect roundness of earliest maturity.

Her fair hair is bound about her graceful head in simple, lustrous bands, so tightly drawn they would

seem severe did not two curls, permitted to escape, dangle upon her snowy shoulders, which rise boldly in dimpled beauty from a corsage of white satin, very deftly laced, to contrast the rounded beauty of her gleaming bust with the litheness of her slender waist.

Over this corsage is draped a simple, silver tissue, girdled at the waist by a zone of argent. From there, this silvery, floating stuff descends to just above the graceful knees, in two bouffant skirts, so sheer that through them shine the exquisite limbs encased by a silken web so fragile it seems but a sheen over the white, gleaming flesh. Her pretty feet are in light, dancing slippers, sandled to the rounded ankles with satin ribbons.

And now, to the music, these little feet begin to move, following accurately, but almost frantically, each wave of Vicenza's wand, that indicates the tempo and the movement; and the measure growing faster, the twinkling feet move quicker, the flying skirts expand, the glistening limbs beat the air more frantically, the white breast begins to throb, the beautiful face, which was pale, grows flushed with mighty exertion, and Eugenia, now dancing on very toes, looks like a sylph flying from a satyr; for a strange, appealing nervousness is on her face that gives to it a wild, yet pathetic beauty. The débutante is dancing for a boon, without which the spy despairs.

despairs.
"Cospetto!" laughs Da Messinay "Eugenia looks as anxious as if she were Herodias dancing for the head of John the Baptist." But he never guesses

she is dancing for his head.

"She looks pretty enough to even enchant a Bluebeard like you," whispers Estelle.

As for Franz, his eyes follow the beautiful débutante till the music ceases, and Vicenza cries: "Salute and retire!"

At this command, la contessa sweeps to the floor with a graceful courtesy and one appealing glance to Pergolese; then, at her padrona's signal, glides to the door. Here, turning, she again salutes, and disappears, a smile of victory upon her face; for Franz is clapping his hands bovishly, and crying: "Bravo! Well done! She is beautiful as a dream!"

To this Da Messina adds, quite enthusiastically: "We have a fortune in this dancer, Vicenza!"

As for Estelle, she has almost danced herself; to the merry rhythm of the music, her little foot has kept time; and she is now crying: "Bravo, bravo, Eugenia!"

"Diavolo!" laughs Vicenza. "Didn't I tell you I'd have her at least a coryphee in a week! I sold a lot of her foolish costumes, fit for a marchessa, to buy her tights and dancing frocks, and the jade half cried her eves out. But isn't she beautiful in them?"

"Exceedingly!" remarks Carlo, as he leads Estelle to her parlor; but Franz lingers up-stairs, and, placing a few gold pieces in Paola's hands, whispers: "Can I engage your beautiful débutante's services for Monday evening?"

"Of course! That's what she's here for." "Then have her at the Cova at nine o'clock."

"Thanks, Captain!" says the woman, as he rejoins Da Messina.

But after the two gentlemen leave the house, she mutters: "Austrian gold is as good as any; still, Pergolese making friends with a white-coat is beyond my

poor brain."

They are just gone when Eugenia, in the costume of the ballet, comes, with radiant face, running down to Estelle, and cries: "God bless you, darling! Paola is so delighted! She says I'll make money for her within a week, and has promised to grant me a favor on Monday." Then she babbles on: "Take me to see Pergolese to-morrow night-you know you promised to; you said you had a box."

"Of course I will! He forgot to hand me my tickets -it must have been because you are so beautiful, my dear. I'll write to him at once," and Estelle indites another little note to her affianced, asking for the loge.

But this evening Carlo does not come, and after waiting for him longingly, his sweetheart goes drearily to bed: to shed some silent tears, as Eugenia, whose head is upon the neighboring pillow, whispers a few crafty and disquieting suggestions; for no place on this earth is so effective for unhealthy confidence from one fair head to another as when the fair heads lie pillowed side by side.

But on Sunday afternoon a note comes from the tenor to Estelle, saying: "I withhold the box, mia carissima, because I don't wish you to go this evening. Believe me, I have never forgotten your wish, which is my pleasure; but after serious consideration, though I had the tickets, I returned them, as I do not think it best for you to visit La Scala to-night. God bless you, dear one! Last night I would have come, but I could not look upon your pleading eyes and refuse the darling of my heart."

Whereupon, flying into a tantrum, Da Messina's betrothed tears the note up, stamps her feet upon it, and cries: "That for his promise! He doesn't dare to come and confront me!"

"Perhaps he doesn't wish you," remarks Eugenia, who, by ill luck, chances to be with her, "to see him in those love duets with Olinska. He fears, perhaps, that you may discover in his ardor that his passion for la belle Sophie is more real than he would care for you to know."

"But I'll see him-and his mistress, too!" says the mutinous one. "I'll have a box in spite of him!"

With this, taking a dozen pieces of the gold Carlo had sent to her, she jeers: "They say Pergolese's notes are golden; I pay gold for his voice! Eugenia, we'll have a box, and a jolly good time, we two bound-girls, while our padrone isn't looking. Come with me, dear one; you are my only consolation."

"But Vicenza won't let me go without Da Messina's permission," pouts la contessa.

"Oh, yes she will, if I ask it!"

And, Estelle flying up to Paola, the latter says: "Of course, if you ask it, pet, and Josepha goes to keep her

eye on Eugenia."

With this, getting Josepha, who loves her, into the room, Estelle prattles to the maidservant: "Run out and get a box for La Scala to-night! You shall go with us to hear Pergolese."

"Shall we have a supper in the box?" asks the prac-

tical Josepha.

"Oh, yes—order that also. Perhaps we may have visitors. Mayhap the Austrian captain will come up. He seemed to put quite pleasant eyes on you in your

dancing costume," she laughs to Eugenia.

Whereupon Josepha goes quite blithely on this errand; for, although she has heard Pergolese sing many times, she is enraptured to hear him again. Besides, the eatables appeal to her also. From her journey she shortly returns, saying: "I could only get a box in the upper tier. Everything else is engaged."

"Yes: thank you."

Going to her chamber, Estelle whispers bitterly to herself: "I'll look down upon my recreant! Everybody in Milano was to hear him sing to-night but me—

the woman he pretends to love!"

And the time of performance approaching, Eugenia comes to her, garbed in one of the few dresses permitted her by the economical Paola; and the two, accompanied by Josepha, walking through the streets to La Scala, which is but round the corner from the Via Oriani, the young ladies, being quite heavily veiled, pass through its grand entrance. Its lobby and foyer are now crowded with men, all in a curious Italian excitement, vivid and picturesque; for every one is jabbering to the other in voices so intense, and with gestures so fervid, that Estelle, a little frightened, runs up the stairs quite hurriedly. She can not catch the meaning, their chatter being too rapid for a not thoroughly educated ear; though Eugenia, understanding, has a sly grin upon her face.

And so, followed by Josepha, who, catching the remarks of some people going into the pit, has now a pallid countenance, they reach a little *loge* in the upper tier, and look out upon La Scala, crowded, even now, from pit to dome.

They are close to the gallery, and Estelle hears an excited murmur rolling through it like thunder presaging storm. The boxes, she notes, quite wonderingly, have very few ladies in them, though packed with men. The Imperial *loge* is devoid of occupants, the only empty spot in the great theater.

Then the strains of the beautiful overture float up to her from the orchestra, punctuated by the munching of macaroons and sweetmeats in the anteroom of the box by Josepha, who already has fallen to on the supper.

And the curtain rising upon the first act of "Lucia," Estelle's heart begins to flutter. She is about to be tortured by seeing the man she loves make protestations to his mistress; for that's what Estelle now thinks Olinska.

But she is to be tortured in another and different way. As the act drifts on, she sees the beautiful Sophie upon the stage, and hears her brilliant voice ring out its first, sad air of fatal presage; then warble the exquisite love song calling Edgardo to her.

'Tis just before Pergolese's entrance! An agony is upon the girl's face, which Eugenia, sitting beside her, yet slightly to her rear, watches with the intensity of a hawk. "In Estelle's torture will words come from her fair lips to betray the secret for which she has suffered much without yet gaining?" is Signora di Vilermo's anxious thought.

Then the house grows so still Estelle can hear the excited beating of her heart. Pergolese is entering! Oh, God, with what ecstasy she had hoped first to hear his voice upon the stage! And now with what sorrow! Yet here he comes, stepping through the trees, dressed in the black velvet costume that is usual to Edgardo.

In another moment she will hear his voice—she does

hear it! Three grand notes come floating to her in the air—silvery, brilliant, dominant. Then it is drowned by a roar like the clatter of Pandemonium. The gallery bursts out in one howling, shrieking, hissing "Traditore!" The boxes and the pit take up the cry: "Maledetto Pergolese! Abasso amico di Austria!"

Though a few friends clamor for him, they are quelled by the multitude of hisses, as the mob dash their idol from its pedestal, and scoff and curse this

man whom they had once worshiped.

Gazing at Da Messina through her shaking operaglass, Estelle can see that even beneath its stage rouge his face is pallid as death, but that, under contumely, his

bearing is proud and noble.

Once more he steps to the footlights and attempts to sing, and again the howling of the audience beats down his voice, as it does the orchestra. The bows of the violins are moving, even the tympanii are being struck, but no music comes to her; only the same snarling, awful roar.

A moment after, as Pergolese tries apparently to speak, a deluge of decayed oranges and other unpleasant things the mob had brought to give him greeting come showering down over this once pet of the Milan stage, and the prima donna flees from the scene. Then, as he raises his hand commandingly, a bone, thrown by some patriot dastard of the upper gallery, striking him on the face, a little blood flows down his cheek; and amid shrieks, cat-calls, and the din of the Inferno, the curtain is let down.

But here come words to Eugenia that are to her as the joy of life, for Estelle is shaking her little fist at the gallery, and crying: "Fools! Idiots! Don't you know that he is risking his life for your vile cause! Dastards, don't you know that he is bringing arms for you to fight the Austrians! Ah, Dio, what coward struck the man I love!"

The roar of the gallery and of the house drowns these

frantic phrases, save to the ears of one—the one who least of all should hear them—the agent of Bolza.

CHAPTER XXII.

A LETTER THAT SHAKES AN EMPIRE.

Then Estelle sinks back in her chair, and almost faints. But Eugenia fanning her, she shortly recovers, and asks: "You don't want to stay here, do you?" for the roar of gallery and pit is still deafening.

"No, dear. I have got even more than I came for,"

answers Madame Espia, softly.

"And so have I!"

Veiling themselves, and calling Josepha, who is chattering excitedly, but who economically makes up a bundle of what she has left of the supper, they come down the stairways, which are now crowded. As they pass the foyer, they hear a rumor that the management have announced from the stage that Pergolese is too indisposed to continue the performance, and have substituted Labari in the part.

This mention of her lover's illness affects Estelle; and, as they walk home, she sighs to herself: "Mon Dieu! I turned upon him like the rest! I disobeyed him! He feared I would be wounded at the insults heaped on him; that was the reason my Carlo did not wish me to see him on the stage to-night. Oh, if he will but come to me, how I will soothe my future husband!"

For Estelle, like most women, clings closer to the being she loves when he is thrown down in the battle of this world.

And perchance had Pergolese come, all might yet have been well with him and her; but, like many men of proud disposition, he does not care to tell this being of his heart that those who have worshiped him have cast him down, and spat upon him.

So, in her parlor Estelle paces the floor, sometimes wringing her hands a little; and Eugenia, gazing at her, knows that this is no time to make suggestion that Da Messina is untrue; and grins: "Cospetto, if I cast doubt upon him now, my little spitfire would fly at me as she would have at those hissers in La Scala's gallery!"

Therefore she craftily soothes Estelle by saying: "Peste, this is nothing to what it would have been had he lost his glorious voice! You heard those three grand notes? The finest in Italy! What matters Milan, when this great artist has the whole world before him! Besides, within a week, that same crowd may change their fickle minds again, and cry him up as they have hissed him down."

So, being a little comforted, the dethroned tenor's sweetheart is helped by Eugenia to bed; and clinging to

her, she whispers: "You are my true friend!"

Rising early the next morning, Eugenia goes up to Madre Paola, and says: "Please give me my exercises now." These she does so docilely, so correctly, and vet so brilliantly, that Vicenza smiles: "You are improving every day. You need take no more steps for me to-day, for you dance this evening at the supper this Austrian officer and Pergolese give at the Cova."

"What! I dance?"

"Yes; they are giving a fête to some lady."

"Gran Dio!" and Eugenia almost faints from joy; but Mother Paola thinks it is from agitation at her coming début, and whispers: "Don't be frightened, child! I'll dress you myself, and put you into a new dancing frock, even prettier than the other;" adding: "You said you would ask a favor from me to-day. Best ask while I'm pleased with thee. What is it?"

"Only that you permit me to go with Estelle to drive in the Giardini Publica, and spend the afternoon there."

"Dio! You want to flirt with men!" mutters Vicenza, suspiciously.

"Oh, no! I promise you—I will not look at a gentleman!"

"Oh, yes; girls always say that till my back is turned! But you can go, if I go to keep an eye on you. I think I'll take an outing myself. If Estelle hires a carriage, it will cost me nothing. Run and ask our little princessa if she will take her friend Vicenza with her."

Coming with this message to Estelle, Eugenia finds the young lady with a note in her hand from Pergolese, which tells her not to expect him this day; but to in nowise let any rumors she may hear of last night's attack upon him distress her, and that now she must understand his reason for not wishing her to visit La Scala.

"I—I don't think I'll go; I hardly care for gayety," she says, in answer to la contessa's request; and won-

ders why her friend's face is so despondent.

"Why not?" dissents Eugenia, stifling a mighty sigh. "Signor da Messina never comes in the afternoon. He will think you are taking your declamation from Madame Pacini."

"Yes, that is her time; but I don't feel well enough to act."

"A little fresh air would bring roses again to you." Then la contessa pouts: "If you don't go, I lose my outing." And this wins her cause with Estelle's generous heart.

"Well, then, dear, ask Josepha to get us a carriage!" So quite early this afternoon, having finished dinner, the two girls, chaperoned by old Madre Paola, in a rather broken-down, old chaise, rumble through the streets to the pleasure spot of Milan.

Estelle is dressed very plainly, both because she does not care to attract attention and also because she knows Eugenia will not be permitted ornament; that young lady wearing, under her padrona's direction, the plain gown in which she had signed her articles of indenture.

As they ride, were Estelle not so dispirited that she

takes little heed, she would scarce fail to notice that Paola is suspicious of la contessa's object in asking

for this outing.

They have hardly left the house, when Vicenza, catching sight of the Polish bottines that had received Da Messina's condemnation, says, sharply: "Put up those man-catchers on the seat beside me, my amorous minx!"

"What do you mean, madre?" asks Eugenia, who

is sitting opposite her ruler.

"I mean those boots, tassled to catch men's eyes!" she growls; adding, grimly: "Your beauty now belongs to me-not to the gentlemen." And Eugenia, poutingly complying with her demand, old Paola takes from her pocket a pair of scissors; for, being economical even of her time, she has brought with her some articles for an afternoon's knitting. With these she coolly cuts off the big, silken tassels that deck the handsome boots, and with a sniff of disdain tosses them out of the carriage window. "Now, you are more modest, girl," she says; then whispers in the indignant contessa's ear: "Let me catch but a glance at gallant in the park, friponne, and you know what I'll do!" Her eves are such that Eugenia hangs her head, and answers, meekly: "Yes, mia padrona." She has no wish to anger her stern guardian, fearing that, kept strictly by her side, she will lose an opportunity that she values almost as her soul.

A moment after, they descend from the carriage, the two young ladies making pretty contrast with the grim Vicenza, as they stand under the trees of the pleasureground.

The Giardini Publica are very lovely, and this March

day is as balmy as a May one.

So, Vicenza keeping a hawk's eye upon her dancer, the two girls wander about in listless fashion amid the shrubs and flowers. But not for long; for, gazing toward the chestnut trees that shade the drive, Eugenia remarks: "Dear madre, would you take us over

there, where we can look at the carriages? I'm tired of babies and their nurses!"

"Why not?" answers Paola. "I can knit comfortably over there; and, though you'll see gallants, Eugenia, they will be on horseback, and out of reach!"

But Vicenza need not fear the bright eyes of la contessa this afternoon. All Eugenia seems to wish is to get Estelle where she can gaze upon that broad avenue of chestnut trees running from the Porta Orientale, now known as the Venezia Gate, to the Porta Nuovo, at that time the fashionable drive of the Milanese.

Therefore, after a few moments, Paola, being seated upon a bench, with one eye on her knitting and the other upon her apprentice, Eugenia leads Da Messina's sweetheart, who seems to care little what she does, to a comfortable spot from which they can view the cavalcade.

Here Estelle raises her parasol, and appears but slightly interested in the spectacle; though all the time her companion keeps pointing, and exclaiming: "Look at those horses! See, dear, there's at least a marchessa in that magnificent equipage! And here's an English milord, I should imagine, with two big, fat flunkies riding on the rumble behind. Dio, Estelle, how boldly those Austrian hussar officers ride!"

Thus commenting on the passing show, she contrives to keep Estelle's languid eyes, if not interested, at least alert, though enlivened by the bright scene, for the sun is shining softly through the chestnut trees upon a brilliant cavalcade that is gradually growing larger, the glances of Da Messina's betrothed become gradually more interested.

Encouraged by this, Eugenia keeps up her prattle as to passing carriages, discontinued every now and then by the watchful Paola calling her apprentice to her side, and giving her some whispered caution or direction. Finally, she brings misery upon Eugenia by saying: "I think I shall take you home, my child. Mademoiselle, over there, seems wearied; and I want you to

rest a little before your dance to-night. You will need

it. I shall have you take three encores."

"But I am brisk as an India-rubber girl, my dear madre!" cries la contessa, trying to be vivacious with a sinking spirit. "Just, please, a little longer, and I'll dance my toes off for you!"

"Well, then, five minutes. In that time I can finish

this stocking," remarks her padrona.

Whereupon, striving to keep the disappointment from her face, Eugenia runs briskly to Estelle, and whispers: "Have you seen anything very interesting yet?" then suddenly ejaculates: "Ola! That's a pretty equipage - and there's that Captain Radetzky, the

friend of our padrone."

"Yes, there's Franz!" cries Estelle. Then her eyes becoming bright, she whispers: "Perhaps Carlo will be here!" but in the next second murmurs: "No, that is impossible. His note said he would be too occupied to even visit me this afternoon." With this, she brings consternation upon Eugenia; for, rising, she sighs: "I think I'll go home now. There aren't many carriages passing. You won't mind it, dear? Besides, Paola is beckoning to you."

Though there is despair in her heart, Eugenia will not accept defeat so easily, and sits, doggedly prattling on: "See that donkey cart!" then suddenly cries: "Look there! There's some commotion! The few people in the carriages have turned their heads away from that handsome equipage!" Her voice is very low; something has got into her throat now. "What

can the matter be? Can you see?"
"No—hardly! The sun is shining in my face," replies Estelle, shading her eyes with her fan; then suddenly she begins to tremble, as a man, standing nearer than she is to the driveway, guffaws to a companion: "San Marco! They are giving that friend of Austria another roast! The people won't look at Signor da Messina High C, though there he goes."

Her glance following the fellow's gesture, a stifled

cry rises in Estelle's burning throat; a little hand goes to a wounded heart! For in a very handsome, open barouche, drawn by two white horses, rides Pergolese, and beside him, in arrogant beauty, the woman who was once his mistress, and whom Estelle now thinks must be again his mistress, Sophie Olinska.

Eugenia, who has gazed upon her victim, with every sense alert, fears she will faint, for then she will give no tongue; but now, to her astonishment, the pretty nose rises in the air, the delicate nostrils expand, the head is posed haughtily upon the erect neck, and Estelle, a strange calmness in her voice, though her lips tremble like aspens, says: "Supposing we go, Eugenia. Paola will be angry with you. I believe she has called you two—no, three times."

A moment later they join Vicenza, to whom Estelle says, half laughingly: "Did you finish your knitting, Madre Paola? That's a very pretty stocking you are making, but quite too warm for this spring weather."

"Oh," observes the dancing mistress, who knows the Milanese climate very well, "this day has been too fine; soon we will have a storm. The winter isn't ended yet."

As they drive home, Eugenia looking at the fair face that is opposite to her, finds no sign upon it; though she notices the little hand holding the fan clutches it once or twice so convulsively she can hear its slender pearl sticks break.

"You haven't whimpered yet to this sting," she thinks. "The only time you cry out is when you get in a rage, as at La Scala last blessed night, when you told me a little. *Diavolo!* When we are back in the house, I'll see what anger forces from your secretive lips."

Whereupon, some quarter of an hour afterward, as her victim, in a distracted way, is pacing the floor of her parlor, wringing her hands in the nervousness of impotent misery, Eugenia, coming to Estelle, throws

her arms about her neck, and sobs: "My friend, how I pity you!"

"Don't dare to pity me!"

The haughty tone tells la contessa that, unless she drives her patient to frenzy, she will scarce obtain the information she must have quickly now, for there are but three days more of Bolza's mercy.

Therefore she puts Estelle rapidly to the question, with as little compunction as inquisitor racked infidel.

"How can I help it," she breaks out, "when I see you flaunted for a rival? My God, dear one, you ought to speak to Da Messina!"

"I-I am too proud to want a love if it does not

exist. Why should I speak?"

"What! When even the ballet-girls of old Paola upstairs are babbling about it; when it is the chatter of La Scala; when all Milan is laughing at *one* tenor and two mistresses?"

"Two mistresses!"

Though the evening has brought darkness, Eugenia can see the delicate face she is reading grow red as fire, then turn pallid and ghastly. "Yes, the great prima donna and the pretty protégée!" she whispers.

But here the tortured one, struggling from her arms, confronts her, and commands, hoarsely: "Don't dare to say mistress to me again! Don't you know that I am the promised wife of Da Messina?"

"Impossible!" This is a gasp of astonishment from

la contessa.

"Why not? Have I not the ring of his troth he gave me in Marseilles the night before I first saw you, when he asked me to be his honored wife?"

"In Marseilles? Incredible! I heard your cries as

he beat you."

"No—as he saved me, and took me to his heart, and told me that he loved me! It was so sudden that I cried to him: 'Is it because I know thy secret?'"

"Because you knew his secret!" breaks in Eugenia. Then, recollecting Estelle's unguarded words at La Scala, with that deft acuteness given to some women, she makes a crafty shot that strikes Estelle's throbbing heart, as she whispers: "He loved you after he discovered that you knew of the arms. He feared that you might betray it. That's why he bound you to him

by asking you to be his wife."

"Misericorde, can you be right?" screams Estelle, her eyes opening with a mighty horror. "'Twas just after I told him that I heard the English manufacturer say he would deliver the arms, wrapped in hay, at Genoa, by the 15th! Grace à Dieu! That is why Da Messina lied to me when he told me that he loved me! That is why my Carlo tricked me into believing that I should be his honored wife!" But here, casting back from her white brow her locks, that have become disheveled, she fights herself, muttering: "Still, has he not treated me with all respect; when, as my padrone, he had power almost sufficient to force me to his arms? I can't believe! Oh, God, my Carlo! He—he was so tender to me—"

"So tender to you that he drives in open state with his mistress, la belle Sophie! So tender to you that tonight he gives a fête for la diva at the Cova!"

"Im—impossible!"

"Impossible! When I, his dancing-girl, pirouette there in Olinska's honor!" jeers Eugenia; adding, as Estelle gives out a harsh, rasping moan: "Paola is waiting to deck me for it. I—I wouldn't tell you, dear one, but it is best that you think no more of Da Messina."

And the torturer's arms support her victim into her chamber, where Estelle falls, gasping, on the bed, her lips muttering inaudibly: "To me he gave but his protestations; to her the glory of his arms!"

But now Eugenia knows enough. Returning to the parlor, she figures rapidly. Her quick brain decides: "Genoa—the arms on the 15th; one day to land them; two to reach Tortone; one day for accidents; the patriots will expect them here about the 20th; they come

packed in hay! What was that I heard from the osteria, when that sighing creature in there slipped on cabbage leaves at mention of hay? A contract with "—she presses her brow in concentrated recollection—"with the—the Fourth Hussars. Diavolo, I remember now! This to Bolza, and I am free!"

A few half-broken sobs from the next room tell her she need fear no interruptions from her patient. If she runs up-stairs, Paola will call to her. She sits hurriedly down at a writing-desk, and on Estelle's paper writes her communication to the head of police.

This she does not dare to blot, fearing some sharp eyes may read the reversed inscription. So she waves it before the fire till dry; thinking how to get the letter out of the house. As Eugenia debates this, she is stricken with her helpless state. She is not permitted to write; she can not pass the doorkeeper.

Suddenly an idea, born in the Lower Regions, and vivid as their fires, springs into her subtle mind. She seals the letter, and, filling the pen with ink, walks into the chamber where Estelle is lying, tossing restlessly. To her she says: "Dear one, could you do me a great favor? I want so much to send a note to a friend, and you know Paola does not permit me to correspond, fearing that I may have a gallant. You send out letters every day; would you kindly address this and forward it?"

"Yes; I—I am not too tired to do you so small a favor, dear Eugenia," replies her victim; and, rising, half totters to a chair beside a nearby table. As the pen is placed in her hand, she asks: "To whom?"

"Signor Enrico Donetto, No. 17 Via Santa Marghe-

rita, Milano."

"Yes, but please say it slowly as I write, so I make no error; and has Donetto two n's or one?"

"One," replies her mentor, and dictates the address, which Estelle scribbles upon the envelope.

Then, ringing the bell, la contessa suggests: "Would

you kindly give it to Josepha. From you it will pass

without question."

Whereupon the abigail coming bustling in, Estelle places in her hand the letter, saying: "Here is a mark; run quickly with this! Put it in the general post, and buy chocolates with the change." And so sends forth from her chamber a little note that is as a snowball rolling down an Alpine glacier—soon to become an avalanche.

For this epistle will stir up in this city, first a ferment, then such battle of townsmen against the disciplined legions of their tyrants that, as their naked hands close on the Austrian bayonets, the great Empire of the Hapsburgs rocks to its foundations.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SAVED BY ONE WHIFF OF A CIGAR.

Reclining upon her cot, resting for her coming exercises this evening, the lady spy laughs: "I've placated Bolza, and in a few days more he'll get me out of Vicenza's clutches!"

So, after a good, easy, conscienceless sleep, this evening, about eight o'clock, after being bathed, and Josepha having dressed her hair, the débutante is led in a long, white wrapper and bare, slippered feet to her padrona's

chamber, to be decked for Da Messina's fête.

Here Eugenia, who seems in the highest spirits, seeing upon the bed a frock of softest, blue tissue, flecked with silver, so short it might be for a veritable child, cries, airily: "My, what a pretty jupe you've got for me, dear madre!" and laughs: "Evoè, have I got to wear so much?" For this, with half a dozen little, transparent petticoats of blue gauze, silken fleshings, so light that their sheeny web seems gossamer, and tiny, white dancing slippers, will be her costume.

"Per Baccho, but I'll make you a fairy!" remarks

Paola; and, taking la contessa in her strong hands, robes her with as little ceremony as a nurse would dress an infant; every now and then remarking on her beauty, and once chuckling: "For this first appearance, ten golden pieces! Cospetto, if I can but get the other half of your indentures from Da Messina! Even now I feel as if you were all mine."

At this, thinking of Paola's despair when, in a day or two, Bolza frees her, Eugenia laughs so merrily that her padrona, giving the shoulders that gleam before her a warning slap, says: "Quiet, my pet, while I put

this camellia in your hair."

Then, being decked to her mistress's liking, and looking light enough to trip upon a cloud, Vicenza, standing her prize before her, commands: "No word to loungers about the restaurant. I go with you. Any flippant conduct I will chastise, as if you were my own child! Do you understand me!" and gazes with hawk's eyes upon her subject until la contessa droops her head, and whispers: "Yes, mia padrona," meaning obedience with all her heart.

A few minutes after, in a little vestibule of the Cova opening into the supper-room, where Pergolese's *fête* is in progress, la contessa stands posed for her entrance.

To her Paola says: "Hark, that is thy music!" for the little orchestra is striking up the Hungarian polka. Opening the door, she commands: "Quick, child! Run in, salute, and do thy best!"

And Eugenia, spurred by a warning she sees upon her padrona's face, flies in, and dances before the supper party like a sylph. But even as they applaud her circles and pirouettes, noting the distress upon Da Messina's countenance at unexpected sight of her, the ballerina laughs to herself: "Santa Maria, he must love Estelle! His looks show he fears she will hear of this entertainment to Olinska. It is very curious he did not make the little thing his mistress before he returned to that diva over there."

So, while Pergolese once or twice gazes grimly at Franz for his ballet surprise, Madre Vicenza's dancing-

girl makes a great triumph.

But after an encore, chancing to make her exit through the wrong door, a gentleman, sitting all alone in another private room, whispers a few words to la contessa.

From this, with rather a startled look upon her face, she comes back, stammering to Paola: "I—I made such a strange mistake in the door. I got in another apartment, where a gentleman is dining by himself."

"Yes, I saw," says the dancing mistress, grimly; then chuckles: "I will warrant he said you were the

prettiest thing in Milan this night!"

"That's just what he did say, *madre*," whispers the débutante, as she is being wrapped up very carefully from the night air, preparatory to being taken home.

But, after the doors of the old house in the Via Oriani have closed upon them, Paola, changing her tone, queries: "The name of the man who spoke to thee, my pet, in that private dining-room? What said he to thee?"

And la contessa answering nothing, though there is a frightened look in her violet eyes, her mistress continues, more sharply: "Come, come! Whisper it in my ear. Paola has managed too many *friponnes* to believe thy mistake was accidental."

To this Eugenia makes no reply; though her graceful knees tremble as she walks up the stairs beside her gaunt mistress, whose strong hand has taken hold of

her delicate wrist.

Arriving at her chamber, where Josepha meets them, Paola, as they divest Eugenia of her wraps, sneers: "This child is so elated with her success! She has a gallant unknown to me; she is so arrogant she will not favor me with his name," and gazes sternly upon the fairy creature, who, in light dancing robe, seems penitent enough, for her eyes, already limpid, are be-

seeching her padrona, and her lips now plead: "Please, madre, I—I do not know the gallant's name!"

"Corpo di Diavolo, don't fib to me!" growls her autocrat; then commands: "Josepha, if our princessa down-stairs does not want her company this evening, take this amorous rogue and lock her up in her chamber — no, she shall have no supper — and to-morrow morning bring her to me. Perhaps with a night's reflection she will tell her little story to her madre. If she hasn't found tongue then, diavolo, I will give her one! Tush, you needn't beg with those blue eyes! Wag your tongue if you would have my mercy."

And Eugenia being led away, as the key turns upon her in her chamber at length finds tongue, and cries, despairingly: "God pity me! In what a hideous scrape I've got myself! I dare not tell Paola that it was an agent of Bolza who spoke to me, and told me I must remain in Vicenza's service till further command. O Madonna mia, what shall I do! Even if the doors were open, I dare not run away! They say no suspicion must come upon my errand until they seize Pergolese. A thousand curses upon that fool Donetto, who beckoned me through the slightly opened door so slyly that I must come into him!" Then she clenches her hands, and mutters viciously, imitating Paola: "If the princessa down there doesn't want company! O Madre Dolorosa! If I could make Da Messina think his pampered darling gave him to death! That would be a victory!"

Though upon this night of her success the spy's slumbers are not so pleasant; and tears fall upon her pillow, as she now almost wishes she had never sent the letter.

But this epistle within forty-eight hours produces much more serious consequences.

The second day from this, at four o'clock, the Austrian officer walks quite excitedly into Estelle's parlor, where that young lady, who had kept her bed for

twenty-four hours, is half reclining, with downcast air.

"I am glad that you are alone, gnadiges fraulein," he says, as he kisses the hand she languidly extends to him. "I am here to ask you, as Carlo's affianced wife, one question——"

"Carlo's affianced wife! You know?" cries Estelle, her eyes, which had been drooping, becoming as-

tounded.

"Yes; the other evening, after Da Messina had introduced me at a *petit souper* to a lady with whom he was aware I was enraptured, I said to him—— But, pardon me; you are so innocent I hardly think it wise to tell you."

"Oh, please do—please do! You owe it to me now; you have said too much to stop. What did you say?" begs Estelle, her face, that had been pale on Franz's

entrance, beginning to regain its color.

"Well, this lady had—had once been in love with Pergolese. To him I remarked: 'You are very generous in aiding a rival.' To me Carlo answered: 'No rival! I have but one love on this earth. I have been debating the matter in my mind, and now I believe it best, for my affianced's sake, to tell you, my intimate, that I have but one love, the woman I am going to marry.' And that was you, my little lady!"

"O Dieu, merci! Carlo told you that?" cries the girl, her eyes throwing off their load of torture, and growing bright with happiness. "Thank you, dear

Franz, for whispering it to me!"

To this Radetzky does not directly answer, but goes on quietly and in low tones, as if he had some unpleasant business on his hands: "As Da Messina's betrothed, I ask you, as woman to man, can you show to me that this gentleman you love is not connected with the movement that we call 'Young Italy,' which purposes to assault the integrity of the Austrian Empire by rebellion in Venetia and Lombardy?"

"Can I prove to you that Carlo is not Italian?"

gasps Estelle.

"No; of course I know his family is an old one in Milan. But I want sure proof that your affianced is not of those who would make war upon us. I myself can not believe it, for Da Messina gives such open friedship to me, who wear Austria's uniform, that it has even lost him the friendship of his people. Therefore, I beg you, as you love this man, show me some little fact that will prove Pergolese is not an enemy of the government my uncle represents."

"Prove to you he is not a— Oh, that is a difficult matter!" falters Estelle, her eyes growing nervous, for the German captain's manner indicates his curious de-

mand is very seriously made.

Noting her agitation, he says, earnestly: "Believe me, I would not ask it did I not have it in me to do something at which my mind rebels but my heart demands, because it means the safety of one to whom I am as a Jonathan to David——"

"You—you mean Carlo's safety? Let me think, dear Franz!" Then she pleads: "Will you not do

what is in your mind unless you know?"

"No! Like every other officer, I have placed my lips on my sword-hilt to the Austrian colors. That oath I do not violate. Prove to me that he is—"

"Oh, it is a hard problem!" she murmurs, and thinks with all her mind; then suddenly gives a little, fluttering, delighted gasp: "I can do it!"

"God bless you, dear little one!" and he is kissing

her hands.

"If you saw Carlo smoking a cigar, which is condemned by every patriot Milanese; if I proved to you that he smoked every evening, but fearing to be insulted by his townsmen, does so secretly—would that make you believe?"

"Of course it would. A member of Young Italy would as soon take poison as a cigar!" replies Franz, eagerly; adding, in unbelief: "But that's impossible.

Carlo has refused, even in private, my cigar-case, till I offer it to him no more."

"Impossible?" Were not the captain's manner so serious, Estelle might laugh; as it is, she remarks, archly: "Put your German nose quite close to these curtains; scent them carefully."

Striding to the draperies, Franz takes one big sniff. "Ach Gott! They do smell suspiciously unpatriotic!"

he remarks.

"Here's more evidence!" and leading him into her chamber in careless innocence, Estelle opens her trunk, and whispers: "A hundred of these Regalias were here when we arrived. Count you now how many!" Then, noting his astonished eyes, she smiles: "You

don't suppose I smoked them?"

"Mein Himmel, they are well-nigh half consumed! Still, make me a little more certain, for this I contemplate doing is such an awful wrench of every military instinct!" Then, the veins standing out on his forehead, the representative of Austrian militarism shudders: "Mein Gott, if my uncle knew!" but says, determinedly: "Prove it to me beyond a doubt!"

"You shall see him smoke!" whispers Estelle.

"When?"

"When next he comes here."

"That must be, for his sake, very soon."

"If he loves me, my Carlo will surely come to-night. Your eyes shall behold him doing the unpatriotic act," she says, vivaciously; for at conviction of Da Messina's love Estelle's face, despite anxiety, is radiant. Then she whispers quickly: "Wait in the street this evening till you see the lights burn up in all my windows; at that come quietly here, and knock twice upon this parlor door; and I will arrange that, even as you enter, my Carlo will have the proof between his very lips."

Here Franz's manner beats all joy out of her counte-

nance.

"I beg your pardon, but I am afraid that will not do," he answers, hesitatingly. "Believe me, I do not

doubt your word, honored lady; but this is a matter of my conscience—betwixt me, my Emperor, and my God! There must be such conduct of the affair that you have no opportunity to give your affianced word of warning. Any man would smoke a cigar to save his life."

"To save his life? My loved one's life? You—you mean that?" she gasps, as if she can't quite realize all

the horror of his words.

"By my love for him, would that I did not!" sighs Franz; then mutters: "For God's sake, give me such evidence that I may save my comrade without being

traitor to my country!"

At this, Estelle presses her hands to her brow, and thinks with all her bright mind; then, though her sweet voice trembles, she says, simply: "You want such proof—that I have no previous word with him; so that, of his own accord, of his own volition, my Carlo does this thing which will make you sure he is no member of the party called 'Young Italy'?"

"Yes!"

"Then come here not later than a quarter to seven o'clock this evening." Her voice is low, her manner agonized. "Come here, and in that chamber I will

prove it to you."

"Thank you, gnadiges fraulein!" and, kissing her hand, the German goes away, giving a passing bow to Eugenia, who has just glided quietly in. In the gloom, neither have noticed her; and even as Franz passes her he does not mark the devil that dominates the anguish in her eyes.

But Estelle's last few words have, unfortunately, been overheard by a woman who has endured a punishment which has made her burn for revenge upon the world, and most of all upon her sister bound-girl, who lives in the luxury of a pampered princess, while she receives the discipline of her station.

For, the previous morning, la contessa had been taken en peignor to her padrona's chamber, and, not daring to answer Paola's questions, had received such chastise-

ment as makes her a fiend. Even as Josepha had received the culprit from the motherly arms of Vicenza, and carried her back to her room, sobbing and whimpering like a child, through all the streaming tears she sees a devil in those blue eyes that makes her shudder, remembering tales she had heard of poison and the Borgias.

And now released from confinement, the fire that still flecks her tender limbs lights in her heart the fire of Hades, especially against her more fortunate sister.

Therefore, this evening, a kind of demoniacal exultation in her fevered mind, Eugenia, while Estelle is engaged in Paola's room, asking that the German officer be permitted to come to her parlor without announcement, takes opportunity to glide into her victim's chamber, and conceal herself in the closet that had held her so safely a few evenings before.

As with noiseless steps she passes through Estelle's parlor, for some occult reason, Eugenia picks up and takes with her a heavy book of bound music, the score of some voluminous opera. In her hiding place, guessing what will come to her, this lady spy sneers: "Estelle said she would prove what he demanded to Franz in her very chamber. She is about to revenge herself upon Da Messina for slighted love with his boon companion and trusted comrade. Diavolo! Under proper management, this may become a tragedy, as medieval as in the time of that Visconti over yonder "—she nods toward the Castello—" who spared no man in his anger, no woman in his lust."

With this, she holds her breath, fearing the beating of her exultant heart may give them warning of her, as she hears Estelle, a little before seven o'clock this evening, show Franz into her chamber, and say to him, pleadingly: "Upon your circumspection depends the faith of my future husband in the honor of his coming wife. Were it not to save his life, I would not do this thing. Sit here; it is the only hiding place I can give you. Listen, and believe that Pergolese smokes

the unpatriotic weed without any hint from me. To make you more certain, I will go to Carlo from you, just as he enters, so that no word can reach him from me, without your hearing it, while I present to my affianced what will give you sufficient faith in him to make you speak words that seem very hard to draw from comrade's lips to save another comrade's life; one who, for his sake, has taken the scoffs and jeers of his kindred."

"Were it anything but my military duty, I would not ask it of you," sighs the German officer; "but even what I do now would be enough to make my comrades think me traitor. And, by the God of Heaven, I will not think myself traitor, too! I will know that I am

saving one innocent of conspiracy."

Almost as he speaks, there is a sound in the corridor of approaching steps; and Estelle, her heart beating as if it would tear itself out of her fair breast, puts her finger on Franz's lips, and seizes a handful of the cigars.

Then, as Pergolese, with a flush of excitement on his face, enters, his affianced, who now is very pale, runs out to greet him; and, as she gives him the salute of sweetheart, says, archly, though there is a little quiver

on her lips: "Carlo mio, as usual a cigar?"

"Cospetto, with great pleasure! I haven't had one for two days!" laughs Carlo; and salutes the pretty fingers that hold the dainties toward him.

"If you had come earlier, you would have had both

cigars and kisses before."

"Yes, but I have had other things upon my mind. By the grace of God he checks himself; for it is waiting for tidings of the coming arms that has kept him from his love.

But being desperately afraid that some chance word by Da Messina will destroy him, Estelle stops her lover's mouth with a kiss, and breaks in: "Please smoke! I'll not let you say a word until tobacco has taken the gloom from thy brow! Look at me-and smoke!"

Whereupon he, putting the cigar in his lips, sits down

and puffs out such clouds of vapor as he reclines in smoker's paradise that Franz, sitting in the darkness of the adjoining chamber, utters to himself an exclamation of fervid joy: "Thank God, I can save him! This man I love is innocent of conspiracy against my country!"

Perchance, had Radetzky waited longer, some word from Pergolese's patriot lips would have destroyed his faith; for late this afternoon a man covered with the dust of travel, brushing by him on the street, has whispered: "Genoa!" which told him the weapons for this town were now in Italy.

But as Da Messina sits in the parlor, looking lovingly at his betrothed, the sound of a book falling in his sweetheart's chamber makes him start up, and say: "Who's there?"

" I— Oh, God!"

Did Pergolese see the face of his betrothed, it would condemn her; for innocence has fear as well as guilt.

But he has no thought of any intrigue, and, stepping to the room, remarks: "It may be some thief, who has sneaked into the house."

Yet at the door, encountering a stalwart, German form, with honest eyes and pale face, coming out to meet him, Carlo, starting back, mutters: "Good God! My friend!"

Then casting astounded eyes about, he sees the white-robed figure of his sweetheart sinking down before him, and whispering with bloodless lips: "Oh, God, I am innocent! I—I did it, my Carlo, to save thy life!"

"That is true as the Word of God!" says the German officer. "I asked the boon from thy betrothed, that I might see coming from your unwarned lips that smoke which shows you are no member of the party of 'Young Italy.' By her devotion to you, your pure one has proved it to me. Now, my word to you!"

As this extraordinary speech assaults his astounded ears, Pergolese stands gazing from the frank eyes of his comrade to the beaming truth in the pure face of his love wonderingly, for he can not believe what to other

men might seem certain proof.

As he thinks, Radetzky's voice breaks in haughtily upon him: "You can believe this or not, as you like. If you doubt my honor, and the innocence of this honored lady, who loves you with her whole heart, I can always give the satisfaction of an Austrian officer to a gentleman who thinks he has been wronged. But this I tell you, Carlo-by Heaven, I will call you that still! I came here to warn you, on receiving certain evidence that you were no conspirator; that proof, by the blessing of God and the devotion of your pure sweetheart, I have; and here's my warning, given to you because you are a friend of friends, one who, for me, has borne the flaunting and scoffing of his city. As such, I tell you that, from my knowledge—which has drifted to me as a member of the General's staff, as the favorite nephew of the great Marshal himself, who questioned me as to you before he reluctantly signed the warrant—that the order for thy arrest is issued. Court-martials are very fatal now. Fly while there is yet time!"
"Time!" answers Da Messina, excitedly, yet bit-

"Time!" answers Da Messina, excitedly, yet bitterly. "Impossible! There is no time; arrests are made within the minute; trials take place within two hours—that is Austrian justice to Italians! We won't

discuss this, I pray you."

"But I tell you there is time. Oh, God, sometimes I feel that I am a traitor! But I inform you that I know from the secret police, one or two of their higher officers courting my favor, that, though the warrant was issued to-day, for some reason I know not, you will not be arrested till the 20th. Therefore, my David, save yourself, and get you gone!"

"The 20th!" whispers Da Messina. "The 20th!" A horrified look comes into his eyes, perhaps one more terrible than had been in his features before; for in this date-he sees that not only danger has come to himself,

but to every other patriot in Milano.

"God knows whether I ought to have told you!"

sighs Franz. "But how I despise these crawling, police spies, that stab a gentleman behind his back! You know we military do not favor Bolza and his mouchards very much. Therefore I hand you this envelope; the handwriting seemed to me slightly familiar. Though I can not recollect it, I may have seen it. But in this envelope came the words that brought suspicion upon you; I had it from an agent of Bolza who fawns upon the favorite nephew of the Governor of Lombardy."

The German passes the envelope to the Italian, but Da Messina does not immediately look at it; for now his glance is riveted upon the fair being, who has caught his other hand, and the pure face that is gazing upon him, as if she were pleading at the gates of Heaven.

Noting her posture, Franz says, hoarsely: "My God, you must believe her! You must believe me! It would be too great an infamy to doubt that angel, though you doubt a comrade! Carlo, I have proved my faith in you by doing what might give me not only death but dishonor before an Austrian court-martial. Say in reply to me, my Carlo, by the love this sweet girl gives to you; by the love I have shown you this night, that you believe both her and me!"

"I do!" Pergolese with one strong hand grasps his comrade's, and with the other that of his love; and, bringing them together in his clasp, whispers: "Franz, I can't look up into your face and doubt her; I can't

look into her eyes and not believe you!"

So, with a muttered "Good-by till better times! Lebe wohl mein bruder! Save yourself!" and another strong clasp of Carlo's hand, the German leaves the room with hurried steps; and passing down the stairway, gets out into the street.

But here he suddenly pauses, and turns back a pace or two; then continues on his way, saying: "But no; that is impossible. The book dropped in the room behind me—NOT IN THE CHAMBER OF ESTELLE!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

"I WILL MAKE SACRIFICE!"

Left together, Da Messina gives another glance of faith at his sweetheart's face, which, even in her fear for him, is radiant; then, drawing Estelle to him, his kisses show that he has no doubt of her love and truth.

But, even in his arms, she whispers: "Fly! For God's sake, take the generous warning given to you! Fly!"

"How? Without a passport—"

"Ah, but you can yet away-you have five days!"

"Those five days are what decide me to stay here! This is the 15th; five days means the 20th of March. This five days' freedom is given me so that to Milan may come no suspicion that Bolza has discovered that the arms with which we are to strike arrive upon the 20th. That is the significance of Bolza's mercy to Pergolese. If they arrest me, who made the contracts for them, the arms will be held in Genoa or Tortone. If they let me remain free till the hav wagons cross the frontier, Foscari and every patriot driver will fall victims to Austria, and the weapons will be seized. With them will go the last hope of my people. I must see the Central Committee immediately; I must give warning to those who are with me. To do this, I should know who has betrayed me. This envelope Franz gave me to disclose to an innocent man a secret enemy, will discover to me a conspirator, perhaps someone in our councils, who has betraved us. Gran Dio! Perchance some Judas in the Committee!"

As he says this, Carlo turns the envelope over in his hand, and, noting the handwriting of the address, his face becomes like a death-mask; but, forcing himself to compare this carefully with three little love letters taken from his breast, the strong man trembles, and has to clutch a table to keep from falling.

Then his eyes blaze with an awful agony; he mut-

ters: "I have discovered the Judas! O God, what finesse, what subtlety, to strike me down! No wonder the papers said La Baronne de Portalis was in England! You are a female Austrian spy, as I first guessed! Threatened with my knife, by an inspiration of the Devil you assumed the name of that fleeing aristocrate, and thus tricked me! God, how you have played your game!" Then he moans: "Oh, darling of my heart! Oh, traitress, that I would have taken as my bride into my arms!" next snarls, hoarsely: "But you don't escape me! Other men have sacrificed what they loved upon the altar of their country! Austrian mouche, thy time has come! You are under my knife again! You die here!" and draws the same stiletto that had flashed over her heart in the postchaise near Montereau.

At this, Estelle, who has been gazing upon him, thinking him insane, stammers: "Die here? What do you mean?" then gasps: "You think me an Austrian spy, who would betray the man I love to death?"

"Miserable wretch, you never loved me!"

"Then, if you doubt my love, kill me!" Her eyes blaze with unutterable reproach; her fair hand bares a bosom beautiful as a marble of Canova's, but throbbing at injustice. "But first, in very common-sense," she whispers, "prove that I am the wretch you say, my Carlo—an accursed spy, who would for Austrian money doom the man she adores to death!"

For answer, he simply passes to her the envelope the German officer had given him; and she reading upon it "SIGNOR ENRICO DONETTO, NO. 17 VIA SANTA MARGHERITA, MILAN," written in her own hand, gasps, "EUGENIA!" in voice so low that he can scarcely distinguish it, as she sinks down before him as inert as if his stiletto was in her heart.

At the name, as if by magic, comes to him divination of the truth!

With a cry of horrified self-reproach, Da Messina sinks down before the woman his condemnation had tortured to insensibility, and, gathering her to his breast, fondles her as if she were his life; and tries to revive Estelle, who is now like a statute in the arms she loves.

Finally, thinking he feels no pulse, he mutters, madly: "Good God! I've killed the tenderest heart on earth!" and dashes to Paola's room, to get her aid.

Taking this opportunity, Eugenia glides from out the closet, through the chamber, and through the parlor, giving one glance of hate at the pale face that lies, quiet as death, upon the floor; and so gets, trembling, to her little room up-stairs. Curiously, she knows very little of what happened. After she threw down the book that brought about what she imagines a catastrophe—from the moment that Franz stepped out of the chamber into the more distant parlor—these people's voices had been so low she could not catch their meaning. She has been afraid from their very silence to move from her closet; but Pergolese's wild cry, as he thinks Estelle dead, has given the spy such curiosity that, coming partly forth, she has seen her opportunity of escape without discovery.

Five minutes after, by the use of stimulants that Mother Vicenza brings to him, Pergolese gets sentiency to his sweetheart.

As she, lying upon a sofa, opens her eyes, fearing a revelation from her tongue, Da Messina orders all others from the room, and locks the door upon himself and his betrothed.

"Forgive me, dear one," he implores, "that, for a moment, seeing thy handwriting, I said words for which I could tear out my tongue!"

"Darling, when you looked into my eyes, and asked no other proof that I was pure, makes me forgive all else!" she answers; and her pale lips upturned to his, her arms opened to him, assure him not only of pardon but devotion.

But, even in her embrace, he whispers: "Speak quickly! Tell me all!"

And Estelle, describing to him what had happened,

begs him to forgive her, explaining that she was nearly crazy with despair and jealousy when she cried out words to Eugenia that, in her agony, almost now seem

to her a nightmare.

But giving him all the information, Pergolese, placing the envelope carefully in his pocket, says to her words that, as they soothe, drive her distracted. "I should have been more careful, dear. I should never, in the first place, by any carelessness let your ears catch the secret of my country's arms. Besides, I should never, by my exertions to gain the friendship of a true, German gentleman — which friendship he has nobly proved to me this night — have given chance of wound to thy dear heart. As it is, by my fault, I have brought, perhaps, the shambles to those who trust me; and have —God forgive me!—left my town, helpless, naked, and unarmed, against its Austrian tyrants—" He rises determinedly.

"You go from me?" she shudders. "My God, they may arrest you in the street! I—I shall never

see you again, my Carlo!"

"No, I am safer for the present than any patriot in this city," he answers, grimly. "The claws that are over me, ready to strike, protect me till they close. My liberty gives me and my city one chance; that chance I take."

As he speaks, she utters a low cry of horror; for on Da Messina's face is that extreme exaltation which comes to patriot when he contemplates an act of devotion to his country that may give him a martyr's crown.

"Don't go! By your face, I see you are about to die! Don't kill me too! Give me a little hope—give me one chance—that I shall feel thy arms again about me, and be your bride!"

Her lips are sweet enough to call a dead man back to life; her loveliness so winning in her despair that, to make this fair creature bride, a lover might give up paradise. Thinking this as he holds her in his arms, Carlo says, determinedly: "I will give myself all chances."

"Thank God!"

"Have you the power, dear one, to give a slight assistance?"

"What do you mean?"

"Have you self-command to guard from Eugenia, by word, deed, and look, that she is suspected?"

"Only by keeping from her vile sight!"

"Then don't let her look on you. If Bolza guesses that I even suspect, with that goes my liberty and all hope. At present, he thinks me a sleeping snake, and lets me lie dormant."

"Yes," she answers, in simple determination. "For the lover who saw a man in my chamber in the darkness of night, and yet gave not even a glance which showed he doubted my purity and faith to him, I can do everything, anything!"

With this assurance from her lips, Da Messina leaves his betrothed, who, under plea of illness, locks her parlor door, and strides the room, distracted, but safe from observation.

Getting out from the Via Oriani—for even now it is scarce eight o'clock in the evening—Pergolese, taking extraordinary precautions to prevent his being traced, make his way cautiously, but rapidly, to the house of the Central Committee.

Here, making the required salute upon the door, and passing by some members of "Young Italy" who, as usual, are on guard about the building, he reaches the room in which he had given to the Central Committee but a little over a week ago the tidings of the coming arms.

As he enters, Da Messina's face and manner show to his fellow-patriots that he brings them very serious tidings.

Fortunately, there chance to be present this evening Manara and il Conte Cesaresco, one of the most prominent patriot leaders. The latter is remarking: "I

am thinking, Luciano, that to-morrow I will go off to our mountains, by the Lago di Guarda, and bring with me, at the proper time, some of my Brescian peasants and lake boatmen, whose brawny sinews and brave hearts will do quite well about the 20th."

"Pardon me, Luciano," interjects Da Messina; "but could you send out, without attracting attention or comment, and get quickly here a majority of the Com-

mittee?"

"By your face, Carlo, it is important!" whispers Manara.

"It is life or death!"

So, various trusted messengers being dispatched, in the course of half an hour there are gathered together in this old, dark, wainscoted room of the Italian palace, that in its time had doubtless seen conspiracy against Sforza or Visconti, men who have in their faces that peculiar look which indicates that they live, facing each day sudden death.

"You have some news to give us, Da Messina?"

asks Gabrio Casati, the Podesta of Milan.

"Yes, news that would never have come to me unless I had been friend of an Austrian officer, for which you have seen me flaunted in the streets and hissed off the stage of La Scala. For that Austrian, if it comes to battle, I pray you. My brothers, in case by any hap of war Captain Franz Radetzky falls into your hands, give him quarter."

"Sapristi! Not unless he surrenders in a hurry!" snarls Colonel Labat. "But you said you had some important news to tell. This is very momentous, asking mercy for a single Austrian captain, when we hope to

slay these white-coats by the thousands."

"That is not my cause for calling the Committee together," answers Da Messina, shortly. "To me has leaked out the fact that, though a warrant has been issued for my arrest, it will not be served upon me until the 20th of this month. You know what that date means"

"By Heaven, the day the arms arrive!" cries Luciano.

"Yes, that is the reason Bolza will not seize me until our munitions of war are here. From it, I judge he knows the arms are coming. As the hay wagons drive through the Tosa Gate, the Austrian troops will have these weapons at their mercy; and, worse than that, Foscari and forty brave men who are taking their lives in their hands to bring them to us. After that, we will be more helpless than before. We will not even have hope; for be assured Carlo Alberto, though he has fifty thousand men ready upon the frontier, will not strike for us till we strike for ourselves."

At this there are some very pale faces about the table; and one says, savagely: "By Heaven, Bolza, by your own carelessness, must have discovered that you, Da Messina, were importing the arms!"

"Misericorde, we are ruined, and Italy with us!" mutters another. "By you we are doomed, helpless,

to the noose or fusilade!"

"Peste!" interjects the Podesta, whose face is very serious. "Reproaches against a brave man who has failed do not help our cause."

"Who will not fail?" cries Da Messina.

"Bravo!" cries the old Republican officer, who likes the courage of conviction. Then he asks, grimly: "What gives you so much confidence, my young man? Do you think because they won't let you be a tenor, that

makes you a soldier?"

"I have hope because the populace, without arms in their hands, were ready to fly at their tyrants seven days ago," replies Carlo, not noticing the jibe. "You know what difficulty we had to keep them from charging on Radetzky's palace. In addition, we have this chance—Bolza is now sure we will not rise till after the 20th! We strike on the 16th!"

"Strike without arms!" gasps one.

way we a

"Yes; strike before we are arrested and slain!" cries

Luciano. "Give us your plan, Carlo my boy, though

it be as desperate as the horse of Troy!"

"Yes!" answers Da Messina, excitedly. "Better be stricken down fighting than die by executioner, like so many who have raised up their voices for liberty without raising up their arms! Let us, with naked hands if need be, fly at our oppressors' throats; and if we must fall, fall fighting!"

"Diavolo, it will be with naked hands!" replies Casati. "We have, as you know, but seven hundred fowling-pieces, and what old, medieval weapons we can take from the museums of the Moldi and Poldi-Possoli Palazzos, besides some hundred logs of wood bound with

steel and made into guns for barricades."

"Barricades! That's the thing!" growls the old "Without them, to rise were mad-French officer. ness! In any other town than this Milano, I should say: Fly, sauve qui peut! But here, in these narrow, crooked streets, that make angles every fifty paces, we have a fighting chance. As the Austrians force their way around one corner, they must meet a barricade at the next. And that being defended to the utmost, when that is carried, at the next angle in the street they must meet another barrier! From the housetops, even our women can throw down stones upon them, and boiling water; while in the streets we men, with the weapons that God permits us, grapple at close quarters with Radetzky's Croats! For this will be no battle of longrange artillery, but a hand-to-hand, medieval combat, where brave hearts often win against arms of precision. I have here," says the old military chieftain, "a plan of the city, showing where each barricade must be erected "

With this, to the wonder of every other conspirator save himself, he digs up a flag in the ancient, stone floor, and pulls out a dusty military drawing. "Expecting this affair," he chuckles, "it took me two years to make this bonne bouche for Radetzky. Here are plans for fifteen hundred barricades."

"So many?"

"It is because there are so many that we may win. To be precise, I have noted on this map fifteen hundred and twenty-three,* with directions where to find convenient material for each one. Tear down your palaces, take out the furniture, heirlooms of centuries, my Milanese nobles!" he laughs. "Rip the benches out of La Scala, my tenor; give up, tradespeople, your shelves and counters to Milano; and in our despair we may win! Diable! We can't have our omelet unless we break some eggs!"

"By Heaven, you are right!" cries Luciano. "We will win! We will strike three days before they ex-

pect!"

"But who will ask the people to do this desperate thing?" demands, in choking voice, Casati, a man of that circumspection which comes to greater age, after hasty consultation with Cattaneo and a few of the longer heads. "For by the Virgin I can't propose such a cruel, hopeless thing to our poor townsmen! My God, to go unarmed against disciplined troops, led by the ablest officer wearing Austrian uniform!"

"Who of you is rash enough to ask the Milanese?" remarks Cattaneo. "For this demand will have to be made publicly; and, if they do not rise, the man who openly suggests rebellion is surely dead by Austrian

court-martial within two hours!"

"I will do it!" cries Da Messina. "I will make sacrifice for any lack of vigilance that gave the secret of the people to our enemies. To-morrow night there is a performance at La Scala, from which I was hissed as a traitor on Sunday. On Thursday night that traitor will say to Milano: 'Rise! Follow me!'"

"Then if they do," replies Casati, determinedly, though his face is very grave, "we will cast our lot

with them and die with our people!"

^{*} Fifteen hundred and twenty-three were the exact number of barricades erected during the five days of the most awful street fighting the world nas probably ever seen.—From the account of the affair by Contessa E. M. Cesaresco.—ED.

Whereupon the matter is hastily arranged. The plan of barricades mapped out by the old Republican officer is cut into pieces, and each piece given to the leader of the section of the city to which it applies. Arrangements are made by the Committee to back up, with all the force they command, the populace, if, persuaded by Da Messina, they rise against their military tyrants.

So, all arrangements being completed, they separate. No leader of them a coward for himself, but simply fearing what may come upon his friends; and there are tears in the Podesta's eyes, as, wringing Carlo's hand, he mutters: "God bless and save you, my boy; but the Virgin help us all! Naked hands against musketry, bayonets, and artillery! God pity my poor people!"

But the younger members are more confident. Cesaresco says: "I go to-night, if I can pass the Austrian sentries, to bring my Brescian peasants to Milan. I will stir the country up. In but a few days the moun-

tains will come to aid the plains!"

As Da Messina goes away, Manara joins him, and whispers, hurriedly: "I will be with you to help you on to-morrow night. We must make this a kind of Sicilian Vespers for the Austrians."

"Yes; but don't walk with me in the street," replies Carlo. "Remember that I am marked by Bolza's police. Don't let a doomed man bring danger upon who

yet is safe."

"Diavolo! I shall get into the same boat with you to-morrow night!" remarks Luciano, as, wringing his

friend's hand, he goes away.

As for the doomed one, the plunge being taken, he shakes himself like a water-dog throwing off the spray, and strides to the Via Oriani, to get such comfort as can come to a man, who, on the morrow, is to be his own executioner, from the tearful kisses of a despairing sweetheart, and three big, black, strong, unpatriotic cigars.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE HANDS OF THE PEOPLE.

At two o'clock the next day, Carlo da Messina comes into his betrothed's parlor, his face unnaturally pale, his eyes unnaturally bright; and, once or twice looking upon the beauty of his love, the moving of his full mustache shows that beneath it a lip is twitching.

To him, very tenderly, she says: "I—I thought you would come, my own, to say good-by once more to

me!"

"You-you guess?" he whispers, the veins expand-

ing in his hand that clasps her delicate wrist.

"Only this—that some time before the bells sound midnight, that— O God, Carlo, you believe that you will be no more!" Her voice is scarce audible; tears are streaming down her cheeks, washing away the traces of those shed before he came; her soft arms are clinging to him, as she pants: "Misericorde, what shall I do without you?"

"This is what I feared," he answers; then begs, in tortured voice: "Please do not unman me! Let me at

least play out my rôle!"

"Then let me play it out beside you!"

"Impossible!"

"What are you going to do to-night?" she begs. "I will know! Shall I go shrieking through the streets in my despair like a mad woman at some vague, indefinite horror? Tell me, so I can meet it more bravely!"

"Then, at La Scala, the man who was hissed as traitor from its stage on Sunday, to-night cries out to Milan, though unarmed, to rise! Be assured, I will let the poor devils know what desperate odds are against them; and if they hold back but two minutes, you can bury me, if Bolza will give you my body. I would not have told you, but you have demanded it, my betrothed. Pray for me—that's all you can do."

"No. I will "-there is a gasp in her voice, but she

goes on, determinedly-" I will see you do it, Carlo!" At this, turning to her, he mutters desperately! "I forbid you!"

"Why? I—I can buy a seat!"

"You shall not! Don't think of enduring the danger that may come upon you in a mêlée in that theater! The better chance I have for life, the less will be your safety; for it will begin by a combat within the Scala's very walls!"

"Pish! There will be no Austrian soldiers there?"

"But there will!"

" My Heaven!"

" For I have heard from the manager some very ominous news. Zerconi tells me that, owing to the disturbance Sunday evening, a detail of infantry will be stationed in the building; that sentries will stand at the proscenium arch. 'Tis something the head of police has never done before!"

"God help us! They must suspect you!"

"No. If they did, I should be standing in front of a firing party ere now. It is some additional precaution of Bolza, who, like most tyrants, is a coward underneath his skin. But," remarks Pergolese, his face, in its misery, lighting up a little, "I think this very thing will help me more than all else. This enormity of outrage, that even in their amusements the Milanese must feel their tyrant's heel, will make every Italian in that audience as desperate as I. But you must not go!"

"Do you suppose I will let them kill you, and not

be there to die with you?"

"That is what I feared. Madre di Dio, the sight of your dear face will unman me! You shall not go!"
"I am determined!" Her eyes, in their despair, an-

swer him, defiantly.

"Diavolo! You forget, if I am your lover, I am also your padrone!"

To this she murmurs, reproach in her streaming eyes:

"You, my Carlo, answer me as padrone, when for love

of thee I cry: 'Let me die with you!'"

But he pleads: "For God's sake, do not force me to make you remember me, not as your lover, but as your tyrant! Give me your promise because thy betrothed asks it, as the last sacrifice you can make for him! Don't refuse me perhaps the only boon you can now give me in this life!"

At this she raises her head, and her face grows white as death, though a damp of agony is upon it. She whispers, her bell-like voice becoming hoarse: "Carlo, I obey you!" and receives from him a muttered farewell

and a kiss hot as fire from lips cold as death.

Then, with a wrench, he is gone; and she, running to the window, looks after his stalwart figure, as he walks up the street, until he disappears behind the buildings; next moans: "I am bereft!" and, throwing herself down upon her bed, tosses frantically about, till the pillows, sheets, and blankets are all upon the floor. Yet as the hours go by she can not endure it. She cries to herself: "Promise or no promise, I see what, tonight, comes to my heart within that great theater! Last time it was assaulted cruelly; this time, perhaps, I will have better luck. Perhaps God will let him live! Perhaps-"

Getting Josepha to her, she says: "Go out and buy a box at La Scala for to-night-not one of the upper ones, if you can avoid it; one in the second tier, close

to the stage, if possible."

Coming back from this errand, Josepha remarks: "Yes, I got the box belonging to the Moldi family. For some reason, none of the ladies will be there. The Baron himself said that he would sit in the pit tonight. He is a great friend of that young Manara."

"Who is a comrade of Pergolese!" cries Estelle, a little hope springing up in her. "Will you go with

me, dear Tosepha?"

"I can't. We've got some girls in the ballet, and I

have to go with them; but I think Madre Vicenza would like it well enough."

So Paola, coming down, says: "My little princessa, I'll go with you, if you want it. I can come without trouble. I shall put Eugenia to bed, and look her up. Carlo, like a good boy, has given me her indentures. She's all mine now, and says she begins to love me as her mother."

So it comes to pass, this evening, that, just as the house is opened, a shrinking figure, in a plain, dark dress, and wrapped up modestly, is followed by a tall, gaunt woman up one of the great stairways of La Scala, and hides herself behind the curtains of a second-tier box, so near the stage that, on the opposite side, she can look behind the scenes.

Here she sits gazing out upon the empty benches of the great pit, which seems slowly filling up; for Paola, who sits, chatting, behind her ear, tells her the cast of the opera "I Lombardi" is a very unimportant one. "Cospetto, there's not a singer in the whole bill," she sneers, looking at the programme.

Then the curtain goes up; and seeing the Austrian sentries, three of them at either side of the proscenium arch, under a sergeant and a corporal, the old Italian woman's eyes blaze like fire. She snarls: "That's the reason no one is here! These white-coats on the stage! Such outrage was never in Milan before! Corpo di Diavolo!" And, with the awful oath floating out from her old lips, gazes at the Austrian soldiers as if she'd like herself to slay them. Then a little hope comes up in the fluttering heart of Da Messina's sweetheart. Others in the audience seem, by their excited gestures, to look upon these Croats—who, in armed menace, are in plain sight just behind the scenes—with about the same vindictiveness as Paola.

"Carlo will have friends here," thinks the girl. Then, gazing at the long, shining muskets and gleaming bayenets carried by the soldiers, she guesses they will soon be directed at the heart she loves, and feels so sick and faint she nearly slips from her chair.

The performance is a blank to her; she scarce knows what the orchestra is playing; even the audience seems a blur to her eyes.

But shortly after the second act begins, the emp'y benches commence to fill.

"Ola! Our prudent Milanese are buying tickets at reduced prices!" scoffs Vicenza. "But how few women! By San Marco, I can't see over a dozen silver combs and gay-colored headdresses in the house!"

Curiously, also, most of these coming in now are men whose faces indicate there is some different busi-

ness in them than amusement.

"Per Baccho!" whispers Paola, her eyes astounded. "Those are brigands coming into the pit! They look more ferocious than the Saracens upon the stage. I've noticed twenty times a stiletto beneath a sash; and that devil right below us wears such savage pistols under his jacket. Santa Maria, half the audience are armed!"

These words bring eager hope, mingled with hideous anxiety, to Estelle; she begins to guess the end is coming! She looks upon the stage, and sees a strange melange of Pagans, Crusaders, and Lombardian peasants; for this opera, "I Lombardi," has as improbable a plot as ever graced Italian opera, which is saying a great deal. The first act is in Milano; the second is in the harem of a Saracen prince; after that, toward the end of the third act, is the grand chorus of Crusaders, Pilgrims, and ladies in the Lombardian encampment before Jerusalem. This scene is now before Estelle, and to her floats music, grand, inspiring, virile, from the pen of Verdi, who, in his youth, wrote the passionate melodies by which he will be remembered.

These exalted strains seem to get into the warm blood of the Italian audience—and also into Estelle's beating heart. "If my hero dies," she thinks, "he dies with the music in his ears that he has sung, that he has loved!"

But all the time her eyes gaze about for the being that she loves, in this vast audience—for the theater now is packed from pit to dome by a black, seething mass of men.

As she looks about the stage for Pergolese, she notices that the Austrian sentries, as they stand at ease on either side of the proscenium arch, are now, apparently, greatly favored by the attentions of some chorus girls.

"Diavolo! Look at the brazen, unpatriotic wenches making amorous love to their enemies!" growls Paola. "If one of my girls is among them, she'll have a beating from me before this night is over! Santa Maria! The wantons are ugly as their actions! See the knock-kneed peasant girl making love to that accursed sergeant! Basta, that Moslem odalisque has the legs of a wrestler! Corpo di Gennaro! The immodest strumpet has let the corporal kiss her, and is laughing at him! But hark, my little one—listen to our song of liberty!"

For, at this moment, that grand chorus of the opera, "O Signore, dal tetto natio!" rises grandly on the air; and one of the chorus, garbed as a pilgrim and cloaked to the eyes, sings so wondrously, so gloriously, that as his tenor voice rings out with exquisite timbre and potent passion over both audience and orchestra, some of the Crusaders stop singing, and gaze upon him.

"Diavolo!" cries a man in the gallery. "They've got the star in the chorus!"

But the audience now joins in this their song of liberty, and as it closes, instead of applause, silence is on the house, broken only by the subdued twanging of a violin-string, which, having been broken, is being hastily repaired, and brought to pitch by a fiddler in the orchestra; for, striding to the front of the stage, comes the pilgrim of the wonderful voice! He throws off his cloak, and reveals an athletic palmer of the Middle

Ages, armed, like a brigand, with a long butcher-knife and two big blunderbusses stuck in his belt.

Here, recognizing him, a few commence to hiss "Traditore!" but these are quickly hushed by the strong hands of men sitting beside them. The cry goes up: "Listen to Pergolese! He doesn't play pilgrim in the chorus to earn his salary, but to speak to us!"

With this, his voice for a moment quite low, but so distinct that every word finds every ear, Da Messina utters a very curious exhortation to mutiny and revolt.

"MILANESE, FELLOW-SLAVES: I am here to tell you that the arms with which we were to strike our tyrants down will never come to us!"

The answer is a sad, despairing murmur, and Paola groans: "This tenor is a maniac, like all the others!" And a boy in the gallery screams: "Fool, Pergolese, to

get yourself shot for telling us bad news!"

But now the orator's voice, clear as a bell, comes ringing up in patriot enthusiasm: "Knowing this, our tyrants are neglectful. But one company of infantry is at the office of police, and one on guard at Radetzky's palace. All others are at the outside barracks, near the walls, or at the Castello. Now is our time! Fellow-slaves, if you would be slaves no more, up with me, and strike the Austrians this very night! Here is the symbol of our freedom!" and throwing to the air the flag of Italy, her lover's face becomes so impassioned, so inspired, that Estelle thinks Da Messina a god!

But now two Austrian police agents are coming down the aisle, calling to the sergeant, who has looked on scarce believing such effrontery to be real: "Shoot down that traitor!"

God of Despair! The sergeant is giving some hoarse orders, and the long muskets of the white-coated Croats are being leveled at the man she loves; and from Estelle's pale lips arises a scream that might awake the dead: "Quick, Carlo, QUICK!"

And, as if he heard her, the pilgrim, who has already a blunderbuss in his hand, shoots the Austrian sergeant down. Then suddenly the amorous chorus girls, drawing concealed stilettos from their manly bosoms, spring upon the Croats, doing them to death; and the man who plays the drum in the orchestra, drawing a pistol, shoots down one Austrian police agent, and Luciano Manara, springing from his seat, fells the other with a walking-cane. After a quick medley, six white-coated soldiers, with their corporal and sergeant, lie dead and bloody upon the stage of the great opera house, and beside them the *odalisque* of stalwart legs, with half a dozen Austrian bayonets stuck through his patriot heart.

"Evoè, those chorus girls were brave Italian men, who have slain those Austrian dogs!" screams Paola. "This is a riot! This is a rebellion!" then shrieks: "Bravissimo, it is a revolution!"

The women on the stage have flown from it, leaving only the men, who seize up eagerly the weapons and cartridge-boxes of the dead soldiers; half the musicians have disappeared; the others, including the patriot-drummer, draw knives and flourish pistols. These, headed by Pergolese, spring over the orchestra into the pit, and go streaming up the aisles as he cries: "Follow me!"

So, bearing the Italian flag, with Manara upon one hand, and Casati, the Podesta, on the other; and some shouting, "Quick—the police office!" and others crying, "The palace of the Governor!" they dash from the theater. After them rushes out the whole audience of La Scala, leaving but two women in the vast edifice—one a fainting girl, the other a gaunt, old dancing mistress striving to revive her.

"Wake up!" begs Paola. "For the Virgin, Estelle, wake up, my sweet lamb! Dio mio! They will put out the lights on us!" then suddenly cries: "What are these fools doing? Cospetto! They are prying up

all the benches!"

For a hundred men are now ripping the seats out of pit and gallery, and taking them into the street to make, with some court carriages they find in a neighboring stable, a hasty barricade across the Via Santa Margherita. From this direction now comes the awful sound of two quick, rattling volleys of musketry.

Then as Estelle, recovering her senses, shudders, "What noise is that?" the wounded men being brought in from the outside, bloody and disfigured, tell her that

the combat has begun.

"Don't grieve so, little one!" says Paola; for Estelle

is crying: "Carlo, mio Carlo!"

"Corpo di Baccho, thy hero is as safe as any! Every one who calls himself an Italian and a man in Milano has risen with him! For, peal on peal, every church bell in the city is now sounding the tocsin of revolt!" Then she suddenly asks: "Have you gone mad, my darling?" for Estelle has picked up the velvet cushions of their box and tossed them on to the now empty floor of the pit.

"No," answers the girl, her eyes aflame. "They are for the wounded to lie upon. Oh, misericorde! They are bringing them in now! Come with me! We can not fight, but we can nurse my Carlo's wounded

heroes!"

As they run down to aid the suffering, a wild cry comes from the outside, mingled with volleys of musketry; and, a moment after, a man, running in, says: "They have swept the company on guard away from the office of the police!" and another shrieks, excitedly: "Bolza has fled!"

With this begins the woman's part in battle. The maimed and wounded are being rapidly brought in from the street. The grand theater becomes an immense hospital. With them comes in Theresa Confanieri, and other angels of that awful time, bringing bandages, medicine, and lint from Riva's neighboring drugstore. The cushions of luxury, torn out of the boxes, become the beds of the suffering. Among these angels is Estelle,

trying to minister with her fair hands to the wounded patriots as they are brought in, groaning.

As she is working, a man suddenly comes in, and cries: "We have captured the Governor's palace, and surprised Radetzky! He has fled to the Castello!"

Some hours after, the morning light just coming in through the windows of La Scala, as Estelle is bandaging a half-delirious silkweaver, who has lost a hand, a man steps to her, and whispers: "Darling, God bless you for your noble heart!"

"Carlo—safe!" she cries. But yesterday she would have swooned in his arms; now she whispers: "One moment, love, until I have finished bandaging this

hurt."

And he standing by, grimed with the smoke of combat, gazes tenderly upon her ministry, and, after the wounded man is succored, publicly takes her in his arms, kisses her devoutly, as if she were a saint, and introduces her to the Contessa Cesaresco, and other ladies who chance to see the salute, saying, proudly: "This dear one is to be my bride as soon as Milan has within its walls no Austrian!"

Then oh, how happy she is, even with the noise of distant battle in her ears!

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE FIGHT FOR THE TOSA GATE.

As Estelle and her lover go off to breakfast at the nearby Rebecchino, this seems already the case; no Austrians are seen in the streets; only men working, as if for their lives, throwing up barricades. As these doff their caps to him, even in the hurry of military travail, Pergolese says, proudly: "Behold, my townsmen love me once more!"

"Santa Maria! They worship you—and so do I, my hero!" laughs the gaunt Paola, who stalks beside

them; and, taking Carlo in her strong arms, lifts him up, and kisses him on both cheeks; then chuckles: "Don't be jealous, my betrothed one, at old Madre Vicenza giving her boy a patriot buss. Prettier women than I wanted to salute Pergolese at La Scala."

But Estelle cries: "Look, they are all smoking now! See, Carlo, every one has pipe, cigar, or cigarette!"

"Yes; we, last night, captured the government tobacco manufactory," replies Da Messina, who is indulg-

ing in an enormous cigar.

At the Rebecchino it is the same; every patriot has a halo of fumes about his head. Old Colonel Labat, made more suave by nicotine, remarks, between puffs of a big Bouquet Elegancia: "You did that very well last night, my tenor; but should have kept one eye upon that Austrian sergeant. Diable, it was a woman's shriek warned you, I think!"

At this, Estelle's face grows bright as the rising sun; then her eyes become troubled as the Republican officer goes on: "Some fools think this is the end of the affair; but I tell you it has not yet begun! Cry out to every one: 'Barricades! Barricades! Barricades!

As he turns away, young Manara, tapping Pergolese on the shoulder, and blowing a couple of rings from his lips, says, almost hysterically: "Our first sweets of liberty!" then whispers: "You and I are assigned to look after the Tosa Gate. Meet me at that quarter as soon as you can."

So, after a very hasty meal, Da Messina leads his sweetheart and the gaunt, old dancing mistress back to the Via Oriani. Here more barricades are going up, and, seeing two or three pianos among them, Estelle whispers to her lover: "Carlo, can I sacrifice mine? I want to do a little;" and for the suggestion gets another kiss.

"Santa Maria!" cries the old woman. "Everything that is heavy enough in my house goes into them!" then suddenly mutters: "Diavolo, my doorkeeper is work-

ing on those barricades! I must look after my caged dancing-bird!" and runs hastily up-stairs, where she finds Josepha and the girls, who had been at La Scala, safe; likewise Eugenia.

But la contessa, being unable to restrain some tears of despair when she learns that Bolza has fled, her mistress comes running back again to Pergolese and his sweetheart, and chuckles: "Eh via! I have discovered why that minx up there dare not tell me the name of the man she gallanted with at the Cova! Cospetto, he must have been some fellow on the Austrian police!"

At this Carlo has a grim smile, and Estelle can't help laughing, as Paola cries: "Santa Maria, I'll see that the friponne doesn't run away after Bolza's man!"

Whereupon, conducting her apprentice, whose eyes are now despairing, to the little chamber that adjoins her room, Vicenza commands: "Undress and go to bed, my child. You won't skip into the street with only a shift upon your pretty shoulders. Don the little chimese—that one cut tres décolleté, my sweet." And Eugenia, not daring to disobey, Paola takes all her clothes from her, remarking, grimly: "Now I can go with easy mind to kill your Austrian friends."

So, the doors of both rooms being carefully locked upon her, la contessa spends five awful days in bed, listening to the roar of artillery, and the volleys of musketry, and the sounds of combat, as it ebbs and flows through the streets of the city; at one moment cursing Bolza, who has left her to her fate; at the next shuddering: "If she discovers, that awful patriot Vicenza will cut my throat!"

But Paola is now occupied in slaying other enemies; from a neighboring housetop, assisted by her girls, she is showering anathemas, brickbats, and boiling water upon the Austrians as they attack the little barricade that closes the Via Oriani. But this is merely a preliminary scuffle.

Early in the evening of the next day, the 18th of

March, after demanding the surrender of the city, Ra-

detzky makes his first attack in force.

An almost straight street runs direct from the Castello to within some fifty yards of the Town Hall of Milan. In this straight street, his movements masked by an awful storm, Radetzky makes his assault; the lightnings and thunders of the heavens dimming that of the Austrian artillery, before which the patriot barricades go down like paper; the ruins of these, being strongly assailed by a column of disciplined troops, are carried at the point of the bayonet; and so, getting lodgment near the Broletto, Radetzky finally captures the Town Hall, with three hundred prisoners, and sends a courier to his Emperor that he has Milano once more in his grasp.

But the next day, Sunday, having massed all his troops at the various gates of the town, every one of which he holds, the Austrian Marshal directs a general assault upon the rebellious city, intending, by his columns fighting their way from every gate and all converging upon the Plaza il Duomo, to squeeze the

patriots within a grasp of steel.

For this purpose he has some eighteen thousand veterans, less some six hundred lost on the night of the riot, and in the assaults on the Broletto. Fighting against a populace that are only armed with some few muskets obtained when the police station and Radetzky's palace were captured, and the archaic weapons taken from the palaces of the nobility, Radetzky would surely win, were it not for the barricades.

These have sprung up innumerable, as if by magic, in every narrow, crooked street. In them are mixed the heirloom furniture of the nobility, priceless antiques of medieval art, together with the unplaced masonry of the Adda palace, the counters of the shopkeepers, and the paving-stones of the streets; for the very foundations of this hapless city are now uprooted to save it. All these are defended with that desperation which

makes men who say "We will be slaves no more!" so formidable, so invincible.

So the awful fight goes on, Radetzky holding the walls and all the gates; but driven back each time he tries to force his way over barricades that seem to his soldiers innumerable. If one is captured, the next is held, and then the next, until even the savage Croats give back from boiling oil poured on their heads from housetops by women and boys; while in the street below fight the *hoi-polloi* of Milan side by side with young nobles in their velvet coats, women jostling men for the honor of killing an Austrian.

At night the red glow of burning buildings lights up these horrors; while over all rises the clang of bells in every *campanile*, signaling where the danger is most imminent.

All this time Estelle works like an angel over the ever-increasing wounded in La Scala theater; and now this is so crowded that the churches are put to the same use. Each day, as the intervals of the combat permit, her lover comes to her, and each time she gives a cry of joy. He is to her as if returned from the dead. Each time he warns her not to leave the hospitals; for she has cried to him: "Let me go with you, my Carlo! I would be happier looking at you fight than thinking what may come to you unknown to me."

To this he sternly says: "You must not!" and tells her of such horrors in the suburbs, where women have been captured by the Croats, who have changed, under defeat, from medieval soldiers to ferocious savages, that she obeys him, and keeps from the actual scene of combat.

So, the time rolls on; the city kept from all communication with the outside world, save by toy balloons that they send up, with messages attached, saying: "Get us just one *porta*, and we are free!" For all Lombardy is now on fire; but the city starves, every inch of its walls and all its gates held by the Austrians.

So Estelle labors and starves with other women until

the fifth day, in the morning, when Da Messina's manner makes her anxious. At noon he comes not, and his sweetheart's eyes are anguished, as she chances to see young Luciano Manara talking very earnestly to the Podesta on the Via Santa Margherita. This youth, once the gayest dandy in Milan, at present is in sorry plight; his velvet coat is rags; half his mustache is burnt off by powder; his once immaculate boots are cut to pieces and soaked with the blood of conflict. His face has that on it which makes Estelle stride up to him, after Casati has turned away, and whisper, with white lips: "Carlo da Messina, your comrade and my affianced, commands with you at the Tosa Gate?"

"Certainly, Signorina!" answers the young man,

bowing with his old-time courtly grace.

"Carlo is dead!" she whispers, for something in his manner dismays her.

" No."

"But you fear for him?"

"I fear for every patriot. Each one is my brother," remarks Luciano; then, for the girl is walking on with him, he says, warningly: "The streets are filled with horrors near the Tosa Gate. The air is full of bullets. I beg you keep away from it." But she still keeping by his side, he pauses, and begs, very earnestly: "Please do not come! In fact, as leader there, I command you not to!"

"You make a military order; you have some military reason."

"Yes. In an hour we assault the Gate. It will be too awful an affair for any woman to look upon!"
"My—my Carlo!" she gasps. "He—he——"

"He will lead with me, and take his chance like any other brave man, my dear young lady! Pray for us all—some of us will stand before God this day! But you must excuse me; I only left our men to receive the last orders of the Podesta." And raising gallantly a hat with an Austrian bullethole through it, and half

its brim cut off by an Imperial sword, Luciano hurries toward the Tosa Porta.

"Carlo leads the assault!" mutters Estelle, a frenzy of dread within her. "That's the reason he came not at noon. O God, I shall not see him before he dies!" Then, half frantic with her fears, she runs after Manara, keeping well behind him lest he may turn her back; and so after a little approaching the place of horror, begins to find dead bodies in her path, one of a lady whose hands have been cut off to gain her rings by barbarous Croats; for this street has been taken and retaken many times.

Now she is almost in the combat. A pastry-cook, still wearing his white cap, but armed with musket, falls, shot, almost beside her. They are carrying two or three groaning wounded into the doorway opposite. Then from house to house she glides, and crouches down in the shelter of a wall, almost destroyed by Austrian cannon, to look out on the combat of the Tosa

Gate.

This is the weakest of all the Austrian portals; but it has some open ground between it and the houses. This space has been gained and occupied by the Italians.

Just here a strong hand taps her on the shoulder. Looking up, she sees old Labat, decked in a Republican uniform of Napoleon's Army of Italy. "Sac à papier!" he snarls. "What in the devil's name, girl, brings you here?"

"I am Da Messina's betrothed---"

"Yes, yes—I know all that. Too gallant a chap for a tenor."

" I-I came to see him die."

"Tonne...Dieu! Thou art like to get thy wish! Tired of him before the orange blossoms, eh!" he chuckles. "Well, thy lad's got as good a chance of death as anyone—better, I think!"

"Mon Dieu!"

"Do you see those movable barricades—my invention—that slowly crawl nearer and nearer that Gate

which spouts out bullets at them? Among the men behind it is the hero you have come to see die. Diable, it is very close now! They have got nearly up to that outer bulwark! And look up the rampart—they have gained the wall there, and are making a flank attack! Sacre bleu! They have given me the command of the reserves," he sobs, tears rolling down his scarred cheeks, "because I'm seventy-seven, and they say too old to lead an escalade! When those fellows ahead of us make assault—the forlorn hope it is called," says the old disciplinarian, "and are all killed, we, the second line, come up, and settle the broken kaiserlicks!"

"All killed!" cries the girl, and looks with those tearless eyes that women have when hope has gone, upon the dread scene before her; the Tosa Gate, manned by the Imperial infantry, spouting death upon those movable barricades of plank and beams torn out of houses that, running upon rounded, wooden logs, have now crawled very close to the Austrians.

"If they could use artillery upon us, we could never get there; but I laid the plan, little one!" growls the old Republican. "See, the boys have unmasked that wooden cannon, and blown the old gates off their rusty, hinges!" Then he suddenly cries: "Diable! Fool, no human being can get through that hell of bullets and live! Don't you see they are going to assault the Gate now!"

For Estelle, forgetting even the fear of death, is running toward the man she loves. If she says anything, it is drowned in the crash of musketry that now flames from the portals of the Tosa!

Just then the hero she loves springs over the barricade on the side of the Austrians, crying: "Milanese, follow me!"

And they do follow him! In one of those indescribable enthusiasms such as came when Napoleon sprang before his grenadiers upon the Bridge of Lodi, these

half-mad patriots, with a wild yell, spring into the arms of death—and win!

No disciplined military mind expected such a crazy attack. Though half of them go down, the other half gain the Tosa Gate. Here, seeing military opportunity, Labat springs forward, waves his sword to the second line, and shouts: "The Old Guard at Marengo!"

With a howl of victory and rage, the artisans, silk-weavers, and ironsmiths of Milan fly after this old Republican, and beat back the white-coat re-enforcements, meeting bayonets with knives, stilettos, and hammers. Down goes the Imperial flag upon the Porta Tosa!

But as they scream "Milan is free!" an Austrian officer, just outside the Gate, is bending over a wounded patriot. To him is running Estelle, crying: "Franz! God bless you; you have saved him!"

But he doesn't answer her; for at him are springing half a dozen Milanese with gleaming knives.

Then, as the Imperialist, getting his back to a wall, with sword uplifted, prepares to sell his life at good cost to his opponents, Manara, rushing in front of his men, puts aside the weapons directed at the German's heart, and cries: "I saw you beat up the bayonets of half a dozen Croats who, as they fled, would have stabbed Carlo to death! No, not even surrender from you, who stayed to save! Only free conduct to the Austrian lines!"

"I fear it is but little use," mutters Radetzky; and, stooping down, he kisses, sadly, the white, upturned face of the man lying before him on the rampart.

"Then give me my dead!" moans Estelle, and sinks down, bending over the body of Da Messina; but suddenly hope flames in her eyes, she whispers: "There is life in him yet! My love shall make him live!"

So, they bear the wounded man to the old house in the Via Oriani, where Estelle, with that tenderness and devoted care that only women can give, nurses her wounded hero very slowly back to life, Some four weeks after this, Lombardy being free of Austrians, and all Milan rejoicing—for Carlo Alberto's Sardinian army of fifty thousand men having just passed through the town—Estelle, using the gold that had been given to her by Da Messina, takes her convalescent lover by easy stages up into the Swiss mountains, where their summer breezes very slowly bring health to a man who, as he lies by the shores of Lake Lucerne, has the misery of hearing of the patriot cause cast to the ground by foolish dissensions after victory is gained.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE CAPTAIN OF GARIBALDIANS.

About a year after this, in early summer, when the snows have melted and the Alpine roses are blooming, one evening in the little theater of Geneva is sung the opera of "Somnambula," in which Estelle makes her début, singing the brilliant rôle of the peasant girl very sweetly. The house is crowded, for to the name of the débutante is added that of Pergolese—the first time he has sung outside of Italy.

After the performance, a gentleman, coming out, remarks: "That young lady who sang Anina is not so bad; but what support she had! Didn't you notice how the great Pergolese restrained his marvelous voice in all the duo passages—how he upheld her less brilliant efforts at loss to his own success? That great artist sacrificed himself for the beautiful woman with whom he sang."

"Diable, he ought to!" a Frenchman replies. "They were married only a week ago in the little church up there. Parbleu, if he drowned her sweet, little voice, the pretty bride might pull Pergolese's magnificent mustache!"

But this idea of sacrifice is not unknown to the prima

donna; and in their apartments at the Hotel de l'Ecu she comes to her husband, who is sitting smoking, and, taking with her fair fingers the cigar from his lips, replaces it with a bride's kiss; then nestles upon his knee, and says: "Do you remember the first time I sat here, Carlo? 'Twas in Marseilles, the morning after you gave me your love."

"Diavolo, times have changed since then!" he sighs.

"Then I had an estate, a home, friends, and a country; now all are swept from me! My comrades of our revolution—for we won fair enough; but afterward, by foolish dissensions, destroyed ourselves—are fugitives and have, like me, to earn their bread and butter in

foreign lands."

"And don't have as good chance as you of doing it, my Carlo!" says Estelle, encouragingly. "You know you have offers of engagements in every great capital of Europe. Franz, with his bridal gift, wrote that they even wanted you to sing in Vienna—if you would only take the oath of allegiance."

"Never!" he replies, in such a padrone tone that

Estelle gives her ogre a kiss.

"Apropos," he remarks, with a little smile, "I have

been offered an engagement in Des Italiennes."

"Paris! Mon Dieu!" the bride cries, excitedly; then, after a moment's delight, her eyes fill with tears; she sighs: "If you accept, we shall be separated;" and her arms close about him.

"I am not altogether sure of that."

"I dare not go," she falters. La Baronne de Portalis might get put in prison. But, if you demand, I will take the risk, even of French justice, to be near you, my adored!"

"Cospetto, there is no risk!"

"No risk? Impossible!" Then, seeing a peculiar expression on her husband's face, the bride asks, eagerly: "What do you mean?"

"I mean that Adrienne, La Baronne de Portalis, has

been tried for her crimes!"

"Mon Dieu! Tried! How—when they have never caught me?" The pretty criminal is getting frightened now.

"No. They have a curious way in France of sometimes trying fugitives from justice, without their presence, in contumacy." *

"I—I have been convicted! Have I been sentenced to prison or to death?" Carlo can feel the exquisite

form in his arms thrill and tremble.

"Neither! But your ex-mother-in-law has been sentenced to pay fifty thousand francs for defaming your character. La Baronne de Portalis has been declared innocent! I wrote to Cremieux some time ago, asking him to get such trial if possible, and then to have you represented by an able avocat. Louis Napoleon, now President of the French Republic, is very favorable to Italian refugees. Your case was tried; your accusers did not have a leg to stand on. You, my darling, are now free, and rich! I believe you have something like fifteen hundred thousand francs. The estate was worth fighting for, it seems."

"Oh, you have done this for me!" and her arms

close upon him again.

"Why should I not? Am I not still thy padrone, and have to look after my bound-girl's interests? You see, you had no reason for your flight. This news came to me to-day; I didn't tell you before, fearing it might agitate you on your début—you should never have run away."

"Oh, fancy, if I had not, Carlo, what would life have been to me!"

"Or to me!" he whispers, tears coming into his eyes.
"Thank God your fears made you a fugitive!"

With wealth arises a new idea to the brain of the

^{*} This, we believe, is a feature of continental jurisprudence and unknown in Anglo-Saxon practice, but it is quite common in France. A certain prominent American, who once was candidate for the office of President of the United States, was tried for some railroad bond transaction in which he had taken part in Paris, and sentenced en contumace to imprisonment after he had left France. It is needless to say he never returned to Paris.—ED.

bride; she asks: "You have accepted the engagement at Des Italiennes?"

"Yes."

"Then I would like, Carlo," she murmurs, very hesitatingly, "with—with the consent of *mio padrone*"—she softens the word with a pretty kiss—"to leave the stage, and sing only for your ears."

"What makes you wish this?" he asks, anxiety run-

ning over his features.

"My voice will never make me very celebrated. That awful night in La Scala, when I screamed to you to save yourself from the Austrian sergeant, something in my agony left me, some little straining of my throat, perhaps in that shriek I gave; it—it will never come back to me, my Carlo."

"Good God, was it for love of me you lost that

perfect voice?" he falters.

"Ah, that was nothing," she says, very sweetly. "I would have given my life as well. But you have noticed it? I thought so. To-night I wept in my heart, as I said: 'In order to make me acceptable, Pergolese is destroying himself.' I—I had once hoped, darling, that my voice might mingle with yours; but let me give you my applause from the boxes, and live, not for the public, but for you."

"It shall be as you wish," answers il cavaliere. Tears are in his eyes, for he has felt the supreme glories of tremendous artistic success, and he knows what his sweet-

heart bride is missing.

Then he says to her: "To-morrow we take the diligence for Lyons. I who led you forth a fugitive will take you back, free and untrammeled, to thy native land."

Some months later, at the close of his first appearance in Paris, after that capital had bowed down to Pergolese's glorious voice and said, "Italy has sent to us a second Rubini," he passes out, with Estelle upon his arm, from his dressing-room, receiving on the stage the congratulations of his fellow-artists. As he reaches

the stage entrance of Des Italienes, a strong arm taps him on the shoulder, a frank, German voice says: "Carlo, my boy, I got a month's leave, and came to Paris to hear thy voice again." With this, the crowd, who have gathered about the stage entrance to see the great Italian tenor and patriot, wonder why this exile from Milan takes to his heart a man in the glittering uniform of an Austrian major; and why this beautiful lady by his side cries "Franz! Dear old Franz!" and throws her arms about the warrior, and, kissing him, murmurs: "Thank you for my husband's life!"

"Carlo, mein bruder," remarks Radetzky, "thy voice is more marvelous than ever!" as the three drive to Meurice's, where Da Messina has apartments. Here, over a little supper—for Pergolese has declined all other invitations, though he has many—the trio are together, as on the Via Oriani. To Franz, Da Messina tells

the story of Adrienne de Portalis.

"Thy other bound-girl's fate, Pergolese, is perhaps as wonderful as thy Estelle's," remarks the German, laughingly.

"Eugenia!" screams Adrienne, for, with her liberty and estates, Estelle has taken back her Christian name.

"Yes. You see, our dancing-girl was probably not too happy with the grim, old Vicenza," continues the Austrian officer, "and was much pleased when, with our troops, Bolza, the head of the secret police, came back to power in Milan. Excuse me," he chuckles; "but this story is the laughter of every one in Lombardy. To Bolza, la contessa fled, and cried: 'I did thy mission! You promised me immunity from Austrian law!'

"'Certainly, Madame la Comtesse,' replied the suave head of police, who, having squeezed the orange, was anxious to get rid of the rind. 'I have scratched your name off our books; you are free from us.'

"With this, thanking him, with tears of joy in her eyes, Eugenia turned to go her way; but at the very door stood her grim, old taskmistress, Vicenza, perhaps

having hint from Bolza. In she came, and said: '1 claim this apprentice under the municipal law of Milan!'

"'Woman,' screamed la contessa, savagely, 'take

your vile hands off of me! I am free!'

"But Bolza remarked: 'Let me see the contract;' and, looking it over, said: 'This document is undoubtedly official and correct, on stamped paper. We do not interfere with municipal laws. Take thy apprentice, old Madre Vicenza, and make her as good a dancer as her mother was.'

"'Diavolo!' cried old Paola. 'Is not this noble blood I have my grasp upon?' For already the weeping contessa was in her stalwart hands.

"'As noble as her mother's, who was considered

the best ballerina in Trieste.'

"And so, being led away, screaning and stamping her feet, to the old house in the Via Oriani, your pretty spy, Da Messina, has been made into the most exquisite dancer Milan has probably ever seen by hard exercise and some privations. But I don't think I'd better continue—Madame is so—so innocent."

"Pish! When you thought me a child in short clothes, I was a widow!" laughs Estelle; then begs: "Tell me! *Mio padrone* will let me listen." she adds.

slipping her hand into Carlo's.

"Very well, gnadige frau! Having made her success, Eugenia begged piteously that old Paola would permit to her one lover; so young Hugo Esterhazy, who has a principality in Bohemia, and is as rich as a Lichenstein, besides being probably the handsomest man in the Regiment Archduke Charles, has become her slave; purchased her indentures from old Vicenza at some fabulous price; and taken la contessa in triumph to Vienna."

At this, Estelle, clenching her little hand, says, viciously: "Don't laugh, Carlo! You may pardon her villainies, but I never shall!"

"And why, little one?"

"Because that woman, for one moment, made you think I was untrue to your love."

"Please remember this, dear one: that, if Eugenia had not been a spy, we would never have known what a friend we have in Franz," remarks Carlo, as the two gentlemen walk off, and Da Messina astonishes Cremieux by introducing his Austrian enemy as his brother.

It is the 8th of June, 1859—a day of triumph in Milano. Victor Emmanuel, the King of Sardinia, and Louis Napoleon, the Emperor of the French, have entered the capital of Lombardy, from which its populace, after the defeat of the Austrians at Magenta, had once more torn down the Imperial banners, and thrown to the breeze the flag of United Italia.

The allied armies having marched in during the morning, the evening is a gala one; among its features a grand performance at La Scala.

The vast house, draped from pit to dome with the colors of France and Italy, is crowded by a mighty audience, made brilliant by the toilets of the ladies of the old Milanese nobility and the gorgeous uniforms of the officers of two armies. The great Imperial box, in which the stout, old Radetzky had once held state as Governor-General of Lombardy, is to be occupied by the Emperor of France and the King and Queen of Italy, these sovereigns being attended by dazzling staffs; the young Queen by a bevy of fair women of exquisite robes and noble pedigrees.

Then the strains of the national airs of France and Italy, played by a vast orchestra, supplemented by the band of the Imperial Guard, herald the entry of the united sovereigns. Soon after the curtain goes up on an empty stage.

People gaze astonished at one another; but the impresario, coming forward, says: "The greatest tenor in Italy was hissed off these boards by his countrymen, because he loved an Austrian; yet from the very

spot on which I stand he proved his truth to his country by calling to his unarmed townsmen to rise against their tyrants! No man shall sing upon this stage till Pergolese sings!"

He points to a second-tier box, where a man not yet forty, in the plain, red shirt of the Garibaldians, with a captain's insignia upon his shoulders, is sitting beside

a lady in the very zenith of her beauty.

Many of the vast audience had seen Da Messina do the deed; had heard his voice cry out to them to rise for liberty! Some had fought beside him at the Tosa Gate!

The house recognizes him! The gallery and pit

rise up and cry: "VIVA PERGOLESE!"

The boxes take it up. The allied sovereigns beckon to this patriot, whose lovely voice in exile had charmed the world. His chief, the patriot Garibaldi, cries from a loge: "I command thee, Carlo!"

In a jiffy the crowd run into his box, pick him up on their shoulders, and carry him upon the stage; while Estelle sits, half laughing, half weeping, as great honor

is done unto the man she loves.

So, standing before them on the stage from which he had been hissed, Pergolese, now at the very acme of his powers, sings to them—first, by the request of the King of Italy, the last great *scena* from "Lucia," and next the song of the Garibaldians.

This last he delivers with the majesty of a patriot and the *élan* of a zouave; and, the dramatic *timbre* of his glorious voice putting into southern hearts romance, enthusiasm, passion, the audience begin to sing with

him the hymn of liberty.

At its close, showers of flowers fall upon him, the Queen of Italy throwing to him the bouquet presented

by the Emperor of France.

Being called into the Imperial box, from it, after a moment, the warrior-tenor turns, wearing the Cross of the Legion of Honor, given to him by the Emperor of the French, and the gold medal of valor, pinned upon his breast by his King; the fair Queen of Italy saying to him: "After this is over, Cavaliere, present your wife to me. I am told she did an angel's part when, ten years ago, this great theater was a hospital."

But as he rejoins her in their box, Estelle sees her husband's brow is contemplative, and asks the reason. To her he answers: "A return from exile is always painful. As I stood upon the stage there, I thought of my poor Luciano, who laid down his life so gallantly for Italia before the City of the Seven Hills, and many other noble souls who have gone from us forever."

"Yes; but at least let us thank God, Carlo, that dear, old Franz is stationed in Hungary; so your swords will not clash in this war, as in the other. But that is

not all that ruffles you, my husband, is it?"

"Not quite. To-night is the last time I sing in public."

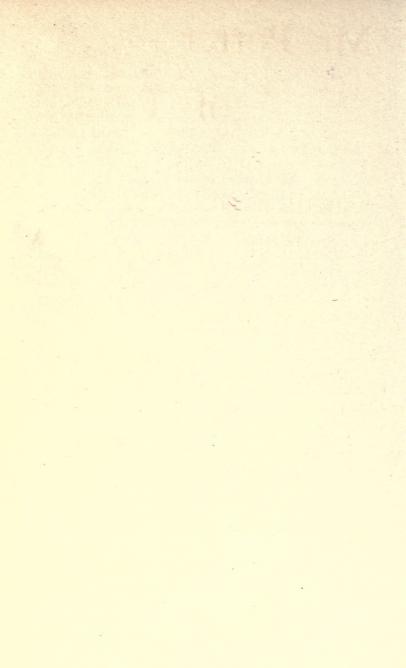
"Gran Dio! Your voice was never more lovely!"

"Yes; that's the reason. This is my perihelion. It's better to disappear in a blaze of glory like a rocket than flicker out as a tallow-dip. I have sufficient fortune. In ten years from now some other gentleman would sing me off the stage. Dead tenors are not remembered long; though patriots and statesmen sometimes live forever." Then his eyes blaze up; he whispers, very tenderly: "Besides, dear one, there is no other fugitive Baronne for Pergolese to indenture——"

"And forever afterward make happy!" laughs Estelle. "But, Mon Dieu! put on a brighter face when you present thy bound-girl to the Queen of Italy, mio

padrone!"

For this mutinous speech, in the anteroom of the box, the fair apprentice gets a most savage kiss.



Mr. Potter

of Texas.

AMERICAN EDITION,

190,000

ENGLISH EDITION,

150,000

"The description of the Bombardment of Alexandria, in 'Mr. Potter of Texas,' is, perhaps, the most stirring picture painted by the pen of any writer in several generations."

Baron Montez of Panama and Paris

A NOVEL.

BY

ARCHIBALD CLAVERING GUNTER,

AUTHOR OF

44 Mr. Barnes of New York," "Mr. Potter of Texas," etc.

"Here, certainly, is a rattling story."

-N. Y. Times, June 5th, 1893.

"Mr. Gunter has written nothing better than the volume before us, and that is high praise indeed, for his writings in recent years have had a world wide reputation."

-Ohio State Journal, Columbus, May 29, 1893.

"With the merit of continuous and thrilling interest."

—Chicago Times, May 27, 1893.

"The latest of Mr. Gunter's popular romances will be read with interest by the many who have already followed the fortunes of 'Mr. Barnes of New York,' and 'Mr. Potter of Texas.'"

- The Times, Philadelphia, Pa., May 20, 1893.

"This is a story of thrilling interest."

-Christian Leader, Cincinnati, June 6, 1893.

Don Balasco Of Key West

BY

ARCHIBALD CLAVERING GUNTER

AUTHOR OF

"Mr. Barnes of New York"; "A Princess of Paris";
"The King's Stockbroker," Etc., Etc.

The first thing we have to say after reading this marvelous story of adventure, intrigue, deception, Spanish brutality, Cuban patriotism, love and fidelity, sacrifice and heroism, and the inexcusably cold indifference of the United States Government: that cold and criminally apathetic must be the heart of the man who does not at once become an ardent sympathizer and a beneficent actor with the Cubans struggling for life and liberty.

. The description of the West Indies by the gifted author—of the seas and islands, and of the people—American, Spanish, and Cuban—and of the climate, and of the manners, and customs, and temperaments of a volatile people, is a piece of word painting truly sublime and fascinating.

-Christian Leader, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Pienty of the romance, excitement, and surprise for which Mr. Gunter's novels are noted.—Boston Journal.

Have you read Mr. Archibald Clavering Gunter's latest story? If not, get a copy at once at the nearest news-stand. Before you begin it, however, eat a good square meal, for you will not eat again until you have finished the book. That is true of all his stories.—The Rochester Courier.

Cloth, \$1.50

Paper, 50 Cents

Sent post-paid on receipt of price.

Hurst and Company,
PUBLISHERS, NEW YORK.

What some of America's ablest Critics say of

JACK CURZON

 $\mathcal{B}y$

ARCHIBALD CLAVERING GUNTER

9

"We find a story of great vivacity in A. C. Gunter's 'Jack Curzon.'"—N. Y. Sun,
"Is full of dush and abounds with dramatic incident."—New Haven Merning
News.

"The book has lots of humor in it, is intensely interesting, and will certainly meet with universal favor."—Daily Journal, Phillipsburg, Pa.

"Gunter is certainly the novelist of the day, who comes nearest to Alexander Dumas, and to our taste he surpasses the Frenchman. If you doubt this, throw aside your encyclopedia and history, and study the Filipino question, with Jack Curzon as your guide and entertainer."—The Press-Knickerbocker, Albany, N. Y.

"Jack Curzon will be received with pleasure in all parts of the country. . . . Mr. Gunter has all the faculties of a successful novelist. He is a graceful, forceful, pungent writer as occasion requires. He is a shrewd analyzer of character, and an excellent weaver of plots in which there is a warp and woof of amusing and thrilling incident." — Oakland Tribune.

"Romance lurks in every corner of the story, and is guided with the special skill for which Mr. Gunter has already acquired a reputation. The tropical nature of the aurroundings of Manila are painted with spirited color, and the author's knowledge of prevailing Spat. It conditions is strongly handled. The story is throughout one of versatile incident, so glowingly touched with reality that the clinching argument of the scenes so nearly simultaneously with the American victory at Manila hring "Jack Curzon" forward as one of the most absorbing novels of the scason . . . Mr. Gunter could not well have written a novel that would win more unanimous interest. It is equipped with every possible factor to hold human attention, and is moreover penetrated by peculiar mental virility and color."--Bston Ideas.

Cloth, \$1.50

Paper, 50 Cents

For sale by all booksellers, or sent prepaid on receipt of price

Hurst and Company,
PUBLISHERS. NEW YORK.

BOB COVINGTON

A NOVEL

BY

Archibald Clavering Gunter

"Of intense interest."-St. Louis Star.

"There is not a dull line between the covers."

—St. Louis Post-Despatch.

"Better than Mr. Barnes of New York."

-London Times.

Cloth, \$1.50 Paper, 50 Cents)

Sent, postpaid, on receipt of price by)

Hurst & Company

PUBLISHERS

NEW YORK

M. S. Bradford Special

A MARVELOUS STORY OF THE DAY

... BY ...

ARCHIBALD CLAVERING GUNTER

Author of

"Mr. Barnes of New York," "Bob Covington,"
"Billy Hamilton," "Jack Curzon," Etc.

The Book is divided into three most unique yet audacious episodes, entitled:

I. THE INVESTIGATION DOWN TOWN

II. THE ROMANCE UP TOWN

III. ADAM AND EVE IN WALL STREET

Lloth, \$1.50

Paper, 50 Cents

For sale by all booksellers, or sent prepaid on receipt of price by

Hurst and Company,
PUBLISHERS, NEW YORK.

The Deacon's Second Wind

Archibald Clavering Gunter

is divided as follows

BOOK I

A NEW ENGLAND HOTEL MAN

I The Drummer of the Village Band
II Mrs. Russell's Dinner Party
III The Deacon's Letter smells of Vice Chapter

86 66

A Brand snatched from the Burning

66 Venus at the Washtub

BOOK II

THE PASSIONS OF A HERMIT

VI Miss Broxton decides she is not in Love Chapter Society drives into the Deacon's Back Yard

VII Society drives into the L VIII The Marble-headed Man 66 68 IX Brother Ver Planck

X A New Abelard

BOOK III

THE TRIBULATIONS OF RUTHY ABBOTT

Chapter XI Elder Ver Planck's Washing Powder

XII "Tell me who Ruth Abbott is!" 66 XIII "Give the Deacon his Second Wind" 66

"Down on your Knees, Squire Perkins!" A Prejudice cruel as Death

BOOK IV

THE DEACON'S SECOND WIND

Chapter XVI "Sic him, Rover!" " XVII "Was that Dad?"

" XVIII Tompkins's Photographic Gallery

66 XIX Tight Boots have made ye cranky, Deacon

Voices from Box B 44

XXI The Surprises of a Night

Cloth, \$1.50

Paper, 50 cents

At all Book Mers, or sent prepaid on receipt of price by

Hurst and Company,

PUBLISHERS.

NEW YORK.

Lately Published

PHIL CONWAY

By

Archibald Clavering Gunter

HIS extraordinary story of how a trip to Central America nearly ruined the happiness of one of New York's great speculators and financiers equals in interest the famous novel "MR. BARNES OF NEW YORK," by the same author, and consequently will have the same unprecedented number of readers.

The following partial list of chapters will convey in part, the scope and interest of this most dramatic novel:

IN A BACHELOR'S APARTMENT HOUSE

THE REVELATION OF THE PARROT'S CAGE
THE BROKEN SCISSORS

THE LADY AT THE HOTEL WINDOW

THE WIFE OF THE REFUGEE

THE TELEGRAM SENT FROM COBAN
THE DAUGHTER OF THE FUGITIVE

On THE DECK OF THE NEW ORLEANS BOAT

THE LITTLE FLAT IN FIFTY-EIGHTH STREET

A Tête-a-Tête Muleback Ride
His Magnificent Enemy

THE OPEN TELEPHONE

A LADY VISITS THE BACHELOR'S FLAT

THE FAIRY BRIDAL GIFT

"BEFORE THE ALTAR I BURY MY FATHER'S WRONGS"
"HER LIFE FIRST, HER LOVE AFTERWARDS"
THE SURPRISES OF A NIGHT

Cloth. \$1.50

Paper. 50 cents

For sale by all booksellers or sent prepaid on receipt of price by

Hurst and Company,
PUBLISHERS. NEW YORK.

The CITY of MYSTERY

By

Archibald Clavering Gunter

N the year 1851 inaugurating the era of vast improvements in the streets and boulevards in the City of Paris, there were demolished in the Rue de la Tixeranderie, seventy-five buildings, among them some of the most celebrated and venerable in ancient Paris.

During the destruction of one of these gloomy old edifices, evidences were discovered that it had been the infamous private prison mentioned by Saint Simon and other writers of the French Regency, the one kept under the orders of Monsieur Marc René d'Argenson, Lieutenant General of the Police of Paris, by his exempt officer Pomereu, in which were incarcerated without process of law any unfortunate persons that official thought proper to seclude.

An attempt by Parliament t correct this abuse by the arrest of Pomereu himself, was instantly defeated by a lettre de cachet from the Regent, and the house of mysterious disappearances remained in its full dread mediæval-prison significance overawing personal liberty in Paris, very little known, very little talked about, one of the secret, silent, ghastly of horrors of the world.

In one of the offices attached to its gloomy cells were found a series of papers buried or forgotten for two centuries, consisting chiefly of extracts taken from the archive of the Exempt, Pomereu himself, describing some of the very private intrigues, plots and cabals of that marvellous epoch when Paris became the centre of the finance of the world, adding the extraordinary vivacity of speculations so grand and so bizarre, that they lent romance to the sombre yet pompous atrocities of the ancient regime.

The first of these, powerful as a secret of the police, and absorbing as the story a great conspiracy is entitled "THE CITY OF MYSTERY."

Cloth \$1.50

Paper 50 Cents

A Novel of Startling Interest

in the complications which have lately arisen in the Far East between

RUSSIA AND JAPAN

is

"Tangled Flags"

By Archibald Clavering Gunter

The hero of the story is a Japanese officer educated at West Point and purchasing artillery for his government from an American Connecticut arms manufactory. His views on Russian aggression are typical of the ideas of his country.

No novel in recent years has had a larger sale

"A rattling romance."-New York Herald.

"Mr. Gunter will retain his public as long as he turns out such books as "Tangled Flags." "—New York Mai! and Express.

"'Tangled Flags' is a book well worthy to begin the literature of the new century. Osuri Katsuma stands forth as strongly as any of Dumas's heroes."

—The Literary News.

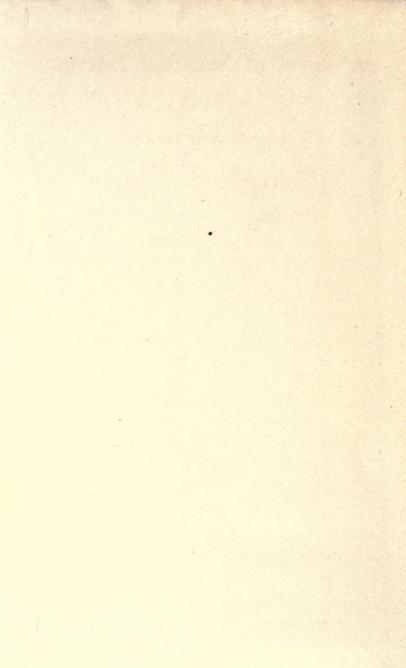
"While the flags of the nations are becoming entangled in Peking, it is small wonder that these people, so diverse in character and training and purpose, should entangle their fortunes and affairs. But few living novelists have the genius and the personal acquaintance with the scenes and events that will help to weave them into such a satisfactory romance as 'Tangled Flags.' "-> Bookseller, Newsdealer and Stationer.

Cloth, \$1.50

Paper, 50 Cents

At all Booksellers or sent prepaid on receipt of price by

Hurst and Company,
PUBLISHERS, NEW YORK.



University of California SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY Return this material to the library from which it was borrowed.





